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THE SPIRIT OF BOHEMIA

A SURVEY OF CZECHOSLOVAK HISTORY,
MUSIC, AND LITERATURE

BY

VLADIMIR NOSEK

AUTHOR OF "INDEPENDENT BOHEMIA," ETC.



NEW YORK
BRENTANO'S
PUBLISHERS

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1927

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*Printed in Great Britain by
Unwin Brothers, Ltd., Woking*

PREFACE

AS the book goes to press I should like to point out that it was finished before the publication of President Masaryk's *World Revolution* in Czech. The fact, therefore, that some of my views are endorsed in the latter work is purely incidental. Without wishing in any way to compare the two books, and being only too well aware of the shortcomings of my own work, I hope nevertheless that the reader will discover in it many a useful explanation of those parts of the *World Revolution* which deal with the local history and traditions of Bohemia; for it is, indeed, the purpose of my book to afford an insight into Czechoslovakia's culture, character, mentality, and spiritual achievements.

A word of thanks is due to all who in one way or another have contributed towards the completion of my work, especially to Mr. Vernon Bartlett, to Professor Vilém Mathesius, Dr. B. Trnka, and Dr. Jan Löwenbach, who have examined the various parts of my book, and made important suggestions in regard to special questions in which they are recognized authorities; and last, but not least, to my own wife, without whose assistance my work could never have been accomplished.

VLADIMIR NOSEK.

VIENNA,

June 1, 1926.

CONTENTS

PART I

HISTORICAL ASPECTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTORY	17
International co-operation the present aim of humanity— Knowledge of Bohemian history—The Czechs as pro- tagonists of spiritual freedom—Czech patriotism—Czechs as pioneers of better education—Czechoslovakia as a political factor—The way towards true internationalism.	
II. THE ORIGINS AND THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE BOHEMIAN NATION UP TO A.D. 1000	23
Bohemia in the palæolithic and neolithic period—Celts, Slavs, and Teutons in Bohemia—Influence of Roman cul- ture—Racial components of the Czechoslovak race—Early life and ways—Slav penetration to the West—Social con- ditions of the ancient Slavs—Early history: the Přemysl dynasty, the Great Moravian Empire—Acceptance of Christianity—Magyar invasion—Consolidation of the Bohemian State.	
III. SECOND PERIOD OF BOHEMIAN HISTORY FROM THE YEAR 1000 UNTIL THE HUSSITE MOVEMENT	35
Relations with Poland and Hungary—First Bohemian princes and kings—The position of Slovakia—Přemysl Otakar II—Early Czech literature—The Luxembourg dynasty: John of Luxembourg and Charles IV—Fore- runners of religious reformation: Waldhauser, Milič, Matěj z Janova, Štítný—King Venceslas IV.	
IV. JOHN HUS	52
John Hus as religious reformer and national leader— Causes of the Hussite movement: religious, social, and national—Greco-Slav tradition—Wycliffe's influence— The story of John Hus—Was Hus a Protestant?—Hus as a Czech patriot—Influence of Czech Reformation in Poland.	
V. THE HUSSITE WARS	66
John Žižka, his personality and methods of warfare— Contrast between Žižka, Hus, and Chelčický—Differences between moderate and radical Hussites—Picardism— Religious extremists—Negotiations with Rome—Com- pactata—Significance of the Hussite wars—Influence in Slovakia.	

VI. THE BOHEMIAN BRETHREN—KING GEORGE OF PODĚBRADY

76

Results of the Hussite wars—The origins of the Bohemian Brethren—Chelčický's moral principles: Christian meekness and non-resistance to evil—Brother Gregory, the organizer of the community—Changed attitude of the Brethren towards education and social class differences—Continued friction between the Pope and Bohemia—The position of George Poděbrad, the Hussite king: his diplomatic qualities and his project of a League of Nations—Failure of King George due to the opposition of Rome.

VII. THE CULMINATION AND THE END OF THE CZECH REFORMATION

86

Election of the Habsburgs to the throne of Bohemia—The question of the independence of the Bohemian State—The King's powers under the Constitution were limited—Protestantism grows despite Habsburg efforts to re-establish Catholicism—Differences between the Lutherans and the Brethren—John Augusta, the fighting leader of the Brethren—Protestantism among the Poles and Jugoslavs—Blahoslav's educational and literary activities—The Bohemian Confession—The Letter of Majesty—Causes of the downfall of Protestantism—Direct causes of the Thirty Years' War—Difference between the revolt of 1620 and the Hussite wars—Peaceful German penetration—The battle of the White Mountain.

VIII. THE TRIUMPH OF THE ANTI-REFORMATION IN BOHEMIA

100

Habsburg revenge: executions, confiscations, destruction of books, expulsion of Protestants—Political measures taken to curtail the powers of Parliament: the Renewed Ordinance—Increased power of foreign nobility—Serfdom—Germanization—Czech nationality survives.

IX. THE EMIGRANTS (KOMENSKÝ AND OTHERS)

108

Emigration from Bohemia—Best men leave the country: Skála, Stránský, Komenský—Komenský's life—Komenský subject to religious mysticism—His humanitarian outlook and his educational ideals—Through education to universal peace—Only an educated nation becomes a happy nation—Komenský's educational, pansophic, and humanitarian writings—Komenský's philosophy—Czech emigrants in Sweden—The story of Wallenstein—Komenský's Last Will and Testament.

X. CZECH REAWAKENING (UP TO 1845)

122

The birth of nationalism in Europe—British policy of aloofness in Continental affairs—Bismarck's policy—

Constitutional changes in Bohemia since 1620—An enlightened despot : Joseph II—Social and religious changes—Rationalism—Germanization—Successors of Joseph II : a period of reaction—Metternich—Bohemian nobility—The beginnings of the Czech regeneration—Dobrovský, the humanist—Jungmann, Kollár—Influence of Herder's philosophy—A great Slavist : P. J. Šafařík—Slovak separatism.

XI. PALACKÝ AND HAVLÍČEK 147

Austria and the year 1848—Czech literary movement becomes political—The first Czech political programme : Austroslavism—Contrast between Palacký and Havlíček—Whitsun riots in Prague—Antagonism between Czechs and Germans—Slav Congress in Prague—Weakness and irresolution in Czech ranks—Palacký's philosophy : the religious idea as the guiding idea of Bohemian history—The humanitarian idea—The Slav question—Havlíček's realism and his sense of humour—His attitude towards religion—Havlíček's criticism of Western culture.

XII. SEVENTY YEARS OF STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE . 171

The Czechs work through political, cultural, and economic progress for independence—Constitutional struggles—Dualism, Austria's doom—Czech pro-Russian orientation—Passive resistance—Magyars as Prussia's friends and allies—T. G. Masaryk—Czech party politics—Masaryk's realism against false historicism—Does Catholicism or Orthodoxy suit the Czechs ?—Masaryk's humanism—Masaryk and Kramář on Austria.

XIII. THE CZECHOSLOVAKS AND THE GREAT WAR . . . 190

Austria as Germany's "bridge to the East"—A pro-German policy as the only policy left for Austria to pursue—Czech efforts at an understanding with other Slavs—Complicity of Austria in the provocation of the war definitely established—Czechoslovaks work for independence—The principles of Masaryk's action—Tactics of the National Council—A triumph of organization, propaganda, and diplomacy—Stress on the importance of active military resistance—Pro-Austrian forces work against the Czechs—Arguments for and against Czechoslovak independence—The rise of the Czechoslovak Republic.

BIBLIOGRAPHY 209

PART II

LITERATURE AND MUSIC

CHAPTER

I. PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS PAGE 215

The importance of the knowledge of Bohemian history for the study of Czech modern life—Factors which influence a nation's character—The West European character of Czechoslovak culture—The influence of German culture—Difference between the Slavs and other races—The mission of the Czechoslovaks in Europe—Nationalism and Art—What is true Art—The moral mission of Art.

II. LITERATURE 226

A. CZECH LITERATURE.

The Development of Czech Literature.

The influence of the religious movement on Czech literature—Renaissance movement *contra* Catholic Romanticism—Classicism and modern Romanticism—Lack of a literary tradition.

Poets of the Czech Regeneration.

J. Kollár: a poet or a philologist?—Romantic ethnology—Two great exponents of ethnological Romanticism—Čelakovský and Erben—The exponent of revolutionary Byronism: K. H. Mácha.

First Attempts in Prose.

Diverse influence in the Czech novel—Romanticism in prose: Božena Němcová—A period of slumber.

The "May" Generation.

A lyric poet: V. Hálek—The failure of his Byronism—The first true poet: Jan Neruda, a sceptic and a realist—Neruda's humour—The Young German Movement—Neruda's poetry—Adolf Heyduk and K. Světlá—Translations—The beginnings of Czech drama—The National Theatre.

The "Lumtr" Generation.

Cosmopolitan tendencies—Sv. Čech, the last romantic—Krásnohorská—Sládek, an exponent of Anglo-Saxon literature—Influence of French and Italian literature: J. Zeyer, an exotic writer—A genius of Czech poetry J. Vrchlický—His translations and his lyric poetry—Opposition of the Realist school—Influence of Goethe and of English poetry.

Czech Historical Novel.

Beneš-Třebízský, Z. Winter, and A. Jirásek—Jirásek's patriotism and the political importance of his novels—His dramas.

Other Fiction.

Realistic novels from peasants' life : Rais, Holeček, Nováková, Preissová, Klostermann, Herben—Naturalism in literature : Mrštík, Šlejhar, Šimáček, Svoboda—The best contemporary Czech novelist : Čapek-Chod—Feminism in literature : R. Svobodová and Viková-Kunětická.

Contemporary Czech Poetry.

Realism *contra* cosmopolitanism—J. S. Machar's philosophic and artistic ideal : ancient Rome and Greece—His review of history and his philosophy—Peter Bezruč, the bard of the oppressed miners of Těšín Silesia—Sova's emotional, impressionistic poetry—His philosophic outlook—A mystic symbolist : Otakar Březina—Various tendencies : decadentism, nationalism, and socialism in poetry—Bolshevism and literature—Czech legionaries as poets and novelists.

Contemporary Czech Drama.

The National Theatre and the Vinohrady Theatre—J. Hilbert, a realist—Historical dramas of Arne Dvořák—Other Czech drama writers—A promoter of pragmatism : Karel Čapek.

B. SLOVAK LITERATURE.

Traditions of Slovak Literature.

Spiritual life of Slovakia up to the nineteenth century—Catholic poets (Bernolák, Hollý) and Protestant poets (Kollár, Šafařík, Palkovič).

Slovak Separatism.

Štur's idea of separate Slovak literature—M. Hodža and M. Hurban—The first Slovak poet : Palkovič—Ballad writers : Král, Botto, and Chalupka.

Second Period.

The Matice Slovenská—A Slovak realist : Kalinčák—Oppression of Slovaks by the Magyars.

Modern Slovak Literature.

Slovakia's greatest poet : P. Országh-Hviezdoslav—Romanticism in Slovakia—A promoter of Russian influence : Hurban Vajanský.

Contemporary Slovak Literature.

Realism *contra* Vajanský's romanticism—Contemporary Slovak writers.

III. MUSIC	313
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Musical Tradition in Bohemia.

The character of Czech music—Old Church songs and hymns—Influence of Hussitism—Choral societies—Secular music.

Czech Contribution to Classicism and Romanticism.

The character of Classicism—Classic composers of Czech origin—First opera in Prague—Folk-songs of Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia—Their character and influence on Czech music.

Bedřich Smetana, the Founder of Czech Opera.

Musical conditions in Bohemia before Smetana—The Prague Conservatoire—Forerunners of Smetana: Křižkovský and Tovačovský—J. Zvonař—Smetana's ideals—The nature of his music—Smetana's life—His operas—Opposition against his Wagnerian reform—Smetana's deafness stimulates him to greater activity—Smetana's fame in other countries.

Antonín Dvořák, the Founder of Czech Symphony.

Dvořák as a writer of absolute music—The elemental strength of his work. His use of folk-songs—Dvořák's early youth—Dvořák and Wagner's reform—His early works—The "Slav" period—Dvořák's quick rise to world fame—Influence of Brahms—Dvořák in England: his oratoria—Dvořák in America—Last period of Dvořák's life.

Zdeněk Fibich, a Real Romantic and Wagnerian.

Fibich's place in the history of Czech music—His extreme Wagnerism—The value of his operas.

Contemporary Czech Symphony: Novák and Suk.

Impressionism, individualism, and technical development of Czech music—V. Novák as a romantic impressionist—Novák's Slovak period—The emotional, subjective, and impressionistic character of Suk's music—Suk's life as reflected in his works—Suk's greatest symphony: the tone poem "Ripening."

Contemporary Czech Opera.

Nedbal and Kovařovic—The character and tendencies of modern Czech opera—The operas of Novák, Foerster, Ostrčil, Karel, and Zelinka—Realism in opera: Leoš Janáček.

BIBLIOGRAPHY	371
INDEX OF NAMES	375

NOTE ON CZECH ORTHOGRAPHY

CZECH and Slovak spelling is phonetic in principle, in so far as every letter has only one pronunciation. The accent is always on the first syllable, irrespective of the length of the word or of the vowels. Vowels are pronounced as in Italian. The French sharp accent (accent *aigu*) denotes a long vowel, the diacritical signs over consonants (ˇ) soften them. Thus :

- a is short *a*, as *o* in *love*.
- á long *a*, as in *father*.
- c as *ts* in *rats*.
- č as *ch* in *church*.
- ch as the German or Scotch *ch* (in *loch*).
- e short, as in *let*.
- é long as *a* in *care*.
- ě as *ye* in *yet*.
- i short, as in *fit*.
- í long, as in *feet*.
- j as *y* in *yes*.
- o as *o* in *pot*.
- ř soft *r*, approximately as *rg* in the French word *berger* (in Polish spelt *rz*).
- š as *sh* in *ship*.
- u as *u* in *put*.
- ú or ů, long, as in *pool*.
- ý as *ee* in *feet*.
- ž as *j* in French (for example, *le jour*).

Other letters are pronounced in the same way as in English.

PART I

HISTORICAL ASPECTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE triumph of the Allies in the World War lies not so much in the negative result of the annihilation of pan-Germanism as in the realization—imperfect though it may be—of the two modern democratic postulates: of the self-determination of nations and of the League of Nations. With the principle of nationality fulfilled, the eyes of humanity are turning more and more to the idea of closer co-operation among nations which, besides the steadily more successful assertion of social justice, becomes the axiom of modern times. It is from such co-operation, embodied in a League of Nations with real authority and accompanied by disarmament, that the world expects the coming of a permanent peace.

The only way towards a better understanding among nations is a better knowledge of each other. The lessons following from the history of the various European nations are not yet sufficiently learned, nor is history always studied from such a point of view as modern times demand. A brief outline of the spirit of Bohemia's history will, it is hoped, afford ample proof that that country's contribution towards civilization is important enough to assure it an honourable place in the history of humanity. The history of Bohemia belongs to Europe, and Bohemia's cause, as Denis says, was always bound up with the cause of humanity, which is, indeed, a sufficient justification for this book. Bohemia's great men, such as Hus, Chelčický, Komenský (Comenius), Palacký, or Masaryk, are not hers alone: they were not only good Czechs, but good Europeans as well, and often forerunners of true progress in European civilization.

The Czechs were the first nation to embrace Protestantism in their search for truth and freedom of conscience. The burning of Hus marked the dawn of the New Age, the victories of the Hussite armies meant the defeat of mediæval theocracy. Palacký claims that the Czech religious reform contained germs of all modern teachings and institutions. The moving idea of Bohemian history obviously was not conquest, but spiritual progress. Palacký says : " Whenever we won victories, it was through moral superiority rather than through physical power, and when we succumbed, it was due to lack of spiritual activity and moral courage." It was the consciousness of moral righteousness which won for the Hussites their battles, and it was the love of freedom which inspired our legionaries to fight voluntarily against the common enemy during the war.

The patriotism of the Czechs and Slovaks was always of a special character. From the earliest times the Czechs had to struggle for their language against the Germans, who surround them on all sides. Palacký considers the struggle against the Germans as the leading idea of our history. Yet apart from Bohemia's strong natural frontiers the chief reason why the Bohemian Slavs were not wiped out in their early history like the Slavs of the Elbe was the pacific policy of the first Přemysl dynasty towards the German Empire, and the fact that they early accepted Christianity. In later history there were comparatively few wars between Czechs and Germans, except the Hussite wars, which were of a religious character. The chief effort of Bohemian rulers, for obvious reasons, has always been to preserve peace with their powerful neighbours, even at the expense of political concessions. Political and national oppression during the period of Austria's rule (1620-1918) intensified greatly idealistic patriotism in Bohemia which, in addition to a sentiment of love and loyalty towards one's own country, became a sense of self-preservation and a striving towards freedom and liberty. Yet though national consciousness has at all times been strong with the Czechs, it was not exclusive to the extent of " my country right or wrong." Hus loved his own nation deeply, yet he preferred a good German to a bad Czech. Palacký respected

the welfare of science and humanity more than the welfare of his own nation. And it is significant of the Czechs' spirit of toleration that on the conclusion of war, during the revolutionary *coup d'état*, when Czechoslovak independence was proclaimed, no acts of violence or revenge were committed against the Germans, and that also later the policy of the Czechoslovak Government has always been one of conciliation and respect for the rights of the minorities of the Republic.

The Czechs have been forerunners of European civilization, not only in their search for religious truth and freedom of conscience, but also in their appreciation of democracy and education. The Hussites and the Bohemian brethren are examples of the former, the efforts of Charles IV, the work of Komenský (Comenius) and of the Czech regenerators confirm the latter. That "knowledge is power" has been long known to them, and political and social liberty they placed as high as national freedom. Political freedom without national independence seemed as worthless to Havlíček as national independence without political freedom.

Apart from these considerations, a short historical outline is indispensable to all who wish to understand fully the spirit of Bohemia. Oppressed nations naturally find hope and inspiration from the study of their past, and this again is reflected in their art, literature, and culture in general.

It is our hope that from these sketches it will be clear that, historically speaking, the Slavs do not show an absolute lack of political sense or of statesmanship so often ascribed to them by superficial critics. The fact that the Serbian and later the Bohemian and the Polish States fell, was obviously due to quite different causes and circumstances. Even the case of Russia cannot be quoted as a proof. The success of Bolshevism has certainly been facilitated by the passivity of the masses, but it was chiefly due to the old political regime which held the masses in the darkness of ignorance, and which prevented the progress of political freedom and the growth of healthy intellectual life. Anarchy is not the ideal of the Slavs, nor are their

capacities less suited to orderly government than those of other nations.

In conclusion I wish once more to emphasize that the chief aim of this book is to contribute, though only in a small measure, to the promotion of permanent peace, which in my opinion cannot be done in a better way than by promoting mutual knowledge and understanding among nations. As long as such mutual knowledge and good feeling does not exist there is little hope for any practical results of disarmament, the League of Nations, or other schemes. Wars in the past have originated not only in dynastic quarrels and imperialistic adventures, but also in religious and political misunderstanding due just to this lack of mutual knowledge. Real knowledge and understanding of Bohemia in the English-speaking world is certainly still scarce, owing perhaps chiefly to lack of translations from Czechoslovak literature. It is to be hoped that this book will stimulate the interest in Czechoslovak intellectual and political affairs which the Czechoslovaks deserve. In the past they were the first nation that fought not for material, but for spiritual interests, and their level of civilization to-day is as high as that of any other small nation. Their mission in Central Europe is one of peace, progress, and evolution. During the war they gave proofs that they were ready to die for their country's freedom, but they do not believe in conquests or oppression, nor do they believe in principle in the settlement of quarrels by violence, whether by war or senseless revolution. Havlíček held that "all true progress is best achieved in the name of reason and without violence: our forefathers used to die for the honour and welfare of their nation, and for the same purpose we now wish to live and work." That is the spirit of Czechoslovakia to-day, striving both in foreign and in internal policy to promote peace. Even before the war President Masaryk declared that political violence would be the beginning of our end.

And yet the principle of nationality is not overcome yet. A nation being, in the words of Herder, a natural organ of humanity, it cannot be overcome by any empty

theories of cosmopolitan internationalism. The attributes of nationality (race, language, customs, history, literature, national character) are too strong to be ignored. National independence, however, must not go to the extreme of national exclusion, and in principle it does not prevent international organization and co-operation for specific purposes. In the Middle Ages nations were organized by the Church and by the States. From theocracy the process towards democracy has been accelerated through the now almost complete vindication of the principle of nationality (national unification and liberation). Parallel with it continues the progress of social liberation. But the achievement of the principle of nationality postulates international co-operation. From nationalism evolution points to internationalism.¹ And although internationalism does not necessitate the negation of nationality or uniformity, nevertheless it does necessitate at least some equality in the general standard of education, and in political and social liberty. There must be a new conception of patriotism and citizenship in accordance with the ideals of national, political, and social toleration: all worship of national selfishness and all ideas of conquest and mutual hate must be eliminated. Only after such moral regeneration, and after a thorough democratization will follow the ideal federation of nations: only thus will the individualism of nations be overcome. At present, of course, such organization cannot be perfect owing to the inequality of nations, not so much in size as in the standard of civilization and political development. Thus the same political regime as in England or France cannot in all details be applied to Russia, who, at present prostrate, can attain only after several years through education and political experience the level of West European nations. But the desire for

¹ An attempt to solve the question "whether the hundred-years-old political ambition of the unified and consolidated Nation-State can be regarded as the last word in political science," has been made by Mr. J. A. R. Marriott in *The European Commonwealth*, as well as by a number of writers of books on the League of Nations that have appeared in 1919 and 1920 (see *Statesman's Year Book*, 1920, p. xxxiv), *Nationalism and Internationalism*, by Ramsay Muir; *Nationality and the War*, by Arnold Toynbee; *Towards a Lasting Settlement*, edited by R. Buxton, etc.

peace needs to be stimulated even now in all countries alike. The determination for the establishment of peace must be equally strong and sincere in all the countries, and the idea of international good will and co-operation must become more universally popular if the League of Nations is to become a working reality.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGINS AND THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE BOHEMIAN NATION

UP TO A.D. 1000

ALTHOUGH Central and Eastern Europe have not been so thoroughly explored for palæolithic remains as Western Europe, and although history is not so explicit about the racial origin of the various Slav nations as of the Anglo-Saxons, French, Spanish, or Italians, yet the following two facts about Bohemia may be regarded as established by archæology, anthropology, and ethnology : (1) That Bohemia was never totally uninhabited, and (2) that the Czechoslovak nation was formed by the gradual mixing of various types, chiefly of primeval men, Celts, Slavs, and partly Teutons.

Numerous remains of men and animals (mammoths, wild horses, etc.) of the palæolithic period (some 15,000 to 20,000 years B.C.) have been found in Bohemia and Moravia (especially in Předmostí near Přerov), proving that, unlike Ireland or Scandinavia, these countries were already then inhabited. These primeval men, who lived by hunting, used mostly bone and stone implements, but no pottery. Their skulls show marks of physical inferiority, such as those of the Neanderthal man, but with certain traces of racial admixture. This type prevailed in Bohemia and mixed with later populations.

During the neolithic period (5,000 to 15,000 years B.C.) Nature developed considerably and Man learned to pursue agriculture, to sharpen implements, to make pottery, and to weave linen. In those times Central Bohemia, South Moravia, and also Slovakia were comparatively thickly populated by men who probably came from the south-east,

and belonged to the Mediterranean dark whites. Their skulls were dolichocephalic (long-shaped). Between 2000 and 1200 B.C. new men began to enter Bohemia. Some came from the north from Thuringen and Mecklenburg, and belonged to the northern blonds, distinguished by dolichocephalic skulls, fair hair, and blue eyes. Others came from the west, and most probably belonged to the so-called Alpine race, since their skulls were brachycephalic (round). From the mixture of these races was created a new type of civilization, known as the civilization of Unětice, and characterized by the erection of high barrows underneath which the dead were buried in a crouching position. This civilization, which was at its height between 1200 and 800 B.C., already belongs to the Bronze Age, and has been definitely established in Central Bohemia, South Moravia, and Slovakia.

About the year 1000 B.C. a new people, of Celtic origin, settled in South-West Bohemia who also erected barrows over their dead, and who most probably belonged to the Boii known to history, to whom Bohemia owes her name (Boiohaemum-Bohemia). On the other hand, about the same time, or soon after (900 B.C.), North-East Bohemia, North Bohemia, and parts of Slovakia were penetrated by yet another people who also belonged to the blonds, but who burnt their dead, and there is good reason to believe that these were Slavs who began to develop the Iron Age civilization only during the first centuries A.D. These people began soon to spread also to other parts of the present Czechoslovak territories. Another Celtic tribe came to Bohemia from France about 200 B.C., known as Latences, who first conquered and then mixed with the native population in Central Bohemia and South Moravia. These Celts were rich and of a very aggressive nature. For a short time they had to give way (12 B.C.) to a Teutonic tribe known as Marcomanni, who, however, left few traces behind, and their influence may therefore be considered transitory.

The two most important factors which then began finally to affect the development of the Bohemian nation were the expansion of the Roman Empire and the migration of

nations. It was thanks to the Romans that the power of the Marcomanni was broken, and a new culture began to form itself under their auspices in Bohemia which may be called Romano-Slav (first five centuries A.D.). Roman legions, it must be observed, did not actually penetrate Bohemia, yet there are numerous remains (coins, tombs, etc.) testifying the presence of Roman vanguards and merchants. Simultaneously, the migration of nations began to make itself felt in Central Europe with deplorable effects and devastation. It was followed by the gradual advent of new Slav tribes, and by the dawn of a new era marking the commencement of Bohemia's history.

Bohemia's history is usually commenced with the legendary advent of a Slav tribe under the leadership of "forefather Čech," and the date used to be considered by historians to be A.D. 491. But it is also possible that this legend refers to the first Slavs who came in 900 B.C., or to a Slav tribe that came in the third or fourth century A.D. At any rate, it seems to-day certain that the strengthening of the Slav element was gradual and slow, and the belief that the Czechs came to a fertile, yet uninhabited land is incorrect.

To sum up, the Czechoslovaks cannot be considered a purely Slav race, as, indeed, no other Slav nation can, just as it cannot be said of any other European nation that it is of a pure racial origin, except perhaps the Scandinavians. The Czechoslovak or Bohemian nation, though pre-eminently Slav, is the result of the gradual mixing of various ethnic elements, including the primeval man, the Celt, partly the Teuton, and above all the Slav. Their physical qualities point to a Celto-Slav type, and the original distribution of tribes may even to-day be traced by the division of the various Czechoslovak dialects. The inhabitants of Central Bohemia, South Moravia, and Slovakia, once inhabited by Celts, even nowadays are generally tall, while the North Bohemians, Silesians, and Northern Slovaks are, like the Poles, of small stature. In the same way, Central Bohemia and South-West Bohemia are populated by men mostly of dark hair which characterized the Mediterranean type, while in North-East

Bohemia, which was left untouched by it, the people have blue eyes and fair hair. This division is, of course, only approximate. Altogether there are in Czechoslovakia about 70 per cent. people with blue or grey eyes and 30 per cent. with black or brown eyes, but only 44 per cent. fair-haired, 52 per cent. brunettes, and 4 per cent. black-haired, which demonstrates both the great mixture of the racial elements and the strong influence of the Mediterranean type. As to the shape of the skull, the dolichocephalic type predominated at first, though the influence of the warlike brachycephalic Celts was marked. It is remarkable to observe that in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries A.D. there were only 33·6 per cent. brachycephalic, 38·4 mesaticephalic, and 28 dolichocephalic, while in the sixteenth century the number of dolichocephalic fell to 5 per cent., and to-day it forms only 14·5 per cent. as against 85·5 per cent. of brachycephalic. The cause of this phenomenon has not yet been satisfactorily explained.

Although the Slavs belong to the Indo-European family, very little is known about their character in early history, and only writings from the tenth century give us reliable direct reports of their life and ways. Their original seat was somewhere north of the Carpathians between the Oder and the Dnieper—a territory full of swamps and forests, neither favourable to agriculture nor very advantageously situated for commerce. The unity of the Slavs and their language was probably preserved even during the Christian Era, though no doubt single tribes began to split away even before. The movements of Slavs known to history began first (in the sixth century) to the south, and then also to the east and west. The movement to the west commenced really already during the first centuries A.D., but its progress was arrested by Teutonic tribes. In the eighth and ninth centuries, however, the Slavs penetrated as far west as Kiel, Hamburg, Gotha, Nüremberg, and Ratisbon, so that all territories east of the rivers Elbe and Sahl were purely Slav. South of the Carpathians the Slavs penetrated as far as the Danube during the first centuries, and it is there, in the present-day Slovakia, where the original Slav has preserved his language and

character most. In the Balkans the Slavs settled definitely during the sixth and seventh centuries. The movement of the Slavs to the east is least known, but it began probably before the fifth century, and continued for three or four hundred years, reaching Nieva, Upper Volga, Oka, Don, and Donec. Thus through subsequent development and consolidation arose the Russian, Polish, Czechoslovak, Yugoslav, and Bulgarian nations. The Baltic and Elbe Slavs succumbed soon to German pressure and extirpation, while the Magyars separated the Yugoslavs (Southern Slavs) and Bulgarians from the rest of the Slav world by conquering the Hungarian plain as well as the Austrian lands, which subsequently they left devastated as an easy prey to Germanization.

The penetration of the Slavs was generally peaceful. The German writer Herder says (*Ideen zur Philosophie der Menschheit*): "The Slavs were never, like the Germans, a nation of enterprising warriors and adventurers. On the contrary, they followed for the most part the Teutonic nations, quietly occupying the lands which the latter had evacuated. . . . As they never strove for the dominion of the world, never had warlike hereditary princes, and willingly paid tribute for the mere privilege of inhabiting their country in peace, they were deeply wronged by other nations, but chiefly by those of the Germanic race. The Mongols, who conquered the north-eastern principalities of Russia, and who are always quoted as the acme of all that is savage and barbarous, not only left the conquered Christians full of religious liberties, but they exempted all their clergy with their families from the capitation-tax imposed on the rest of the inhabitants. Neither did they deprive them of their lands and national language, manners, and customs. The Mohammedan Turks left the Bulgarians and Serbs their faith, property, and institutions: whilst the German princes and bishops divided amongst themselves the lands of the Slavs who were either exterminated or else reduced to bondage." And all this was done under the pretext of spreading Christianity. According to contemporary German writers even after the establishment of Christianity, whenever a Slav was met on the high road

and could not give a satisfactory reason for absenting himself from his village, he was killed on the spot. The Czechoslovaks have escaped the fate of the Elbe Slavs only owing to the strong geographic frontiers of Bohemia, their natural strength of resistance, and their early acceptance of Christianity.

Although this cruel extirpation of the Elbe Slavs remains a sad historical fact, it would, however, be a fallacy to idealize Slavs as absolute opponents of all fighting, for they often, at all periods in history, waged wars with much courage and skill, even if seldom displaying any desire of conquest, aggression, and oppression of others.

The chief occupation of the Slavs, at any rate during the first thousand years, was equally hunting, agriculture, and cattle-breeding, according to local conditions, as Professor Niederle proved in his latest volume of *Slav Antiquities* against contrary theories of Peisker and others. Hospitality, natural kindness, and musical talent were admittedly the chief traits of character of the Slavs at all times. The old Slavs were free from the vice of stealing and fraud, and if they objected to Christianity at first it was "on account of the immorality shown by thieving and robbing prevalent amongst Christians (i.e. Germans), and on account of the cruelties which they committed on one another" (*Vita St. Otonis*). According to Helmond, a German clergyman from Holstein living in the twelfth century, there were no poor amongst the Slavs, who took care of all who from physical debility or other causes were unable to provide for themselves. As to their religion, there is very little authentic information about the Pagan Slavs, at any rate almost none about Bohemia or Poland. Slav deities were mostly phenomena of Nature (such as sun and thunder) who were supposed to be commanded by a Supreme Deity in Heaven. The pagans further believed the souls of the dead to continue existence as spirits of good or evil. A number of customs were connected with birth, marriage, and death, some of which were long preserved by tradition. From tombs found in the tenth century it appears that at that time they no longer burnt but interred their dead. Wives and servants were most

probably buried together with their husbands and masters. Wives enjoyed great freedom. Polygamy reigned in Bohemia even after the introduction of Christianity, and men had several concubines besides their legitimate wives.

It seems that there were no social differences among the old Slavs, and that they were all free and equal to each other. Differentiation began later, after the introduction of Christianity, when society began to divide itself into aristocracy, freemen, and subject peasants. The Czech chronicler Cosmas (1045-1125) says of the early Slav equality: "No one could say of anything: This is mine; but, as is usual in monasteries, they said with their mouths, hearts, and deeds: Everything we own is ours. There were no robbers among them and no poor." This Slav communism of the earliest stages of their civilization of course did not prevent their later development on similar lines to other nations.

The Slavs of Bohemia were at first divided into several tribes, of whom the Czechs in the centre were the strongest. This division was partly due to geographic reasons, partly to the mixing with the autochthonous population. Patriarchal families united into clans and tribes, but clans and tribes united under a common prince only in times of war. In this way began the consolidation of Bohemia and Moravia, which latter in those times included also Slovakia. The final consolidation of Bohemia, which progressed especially during the reign of Boleslav the Cruel (936-967), was finally achieved in 996, when the power of the rival Slavnik dynasty of Libice (East Bohemia) was broken and Moravia reconquered from the Magyars. Prague, founded by the legendary **Libuše**, was already then a flourishing city, as is testified by the Spanish Arabian Ibrahim-Ibn-Jacob, who described it as a "city built of stone and lime, and one of the richest commercial centres, where Slavs from Cracow meet with Jews and Turks." The earlier history of Bohemia is obscure, and the early chroniclers of Cosmas and Dalimil are not always reliable.

The first Czech dynasty was founded by the legendary peasant-prince **Přemysl**, and ruled for about six centuries (up to 1306). Prior to their accession, Bohemia was for

some time during the sixth century tributary to the Avars, from whom it was liberated by the Slav prince Samo in 623. The grateful Bohemian Slavs made him their ruler, and his Empire extended far to the north, south, and east, including the Slavs of the Elbe, the Moravians, and the Southern Slavs. Samo successfully fought the aggressive Franks, but for centuries after the Czechs had to struggle against their German neighbours. They only allied themselves with them against the Magyars in 907 and 955. Charlemagne attacked Bohemia in 805, Louis the Pious fought Moravia in 846, 864, and 868, Arnulph fought against Svatopluk in 890, and Henry the Fowler entered Bohemia with an army in 928. The Czechs were as a rule successful in repulsing these onslaughts, yet finally **Venceslas** (928-936), the patron saint of Bohemia, found it opportune in the interests of peace to enter into an agreement, by which Bohemia was to pay a small annual tribute to Germany and to become formally a vassal of the Holy Roman (German) Empire, though *de facto* preserving her independence as a separate State. This saved her from the danger of continued wars with Germany which might have proved fatal, and reconciled Bohemia with Western influence. Bohemia, nevertheless, was never considered the property of German Emperors, and therefore remained independent.

More interesting perhaps than the early history of Bohemia is that of the Slavs of Moravia and Slovakia, who then constituted the so-called Great Moravian Empire, founded by the Mojmir dynasty. The seat of Mojmir's nephew **Rostislav** (846-870), the legendary Velehrad, was most probably on the spot of the castle Děvín, on the conflux of the rivers March and Danube, west of Bratislava, as contended by J. I. Červinka and Dr. Zavadil. It was during Rostislav's reign that the Slav apostles Cyril and Methodius were invited to come to Moravia from Salonica (862), although Christianity had even before then partially penetrated to Bohemia and Moravia during Charlemagne's reign from Germany. Frankish and Bavarian priests built some Christian churches in Slovakia (in Nitra, 830), and in 845 fourteen Czech *vojevods* were baptized in

Regensburg. Rostislav had a double motive in inviting the Slav missionaries: religious and political. Religious since he saw that Christianity could not spread rapidly enough if preached by German priests whom the people could not understand and who could not understand them. He therefore had the chief parts of the Bible translated into Slav by means of a new alphabet invented by Methodius with the aid of the Greek alphabet (*glagolica*), which in a modified form (*cyrilica*) has spread to, and is still used in, Serbia and Russia. Up to then apparently the Slavs did not write in their own language, using only signs for things they wanted to remember. The second object of Rostislav was political in as much as he strove thereby to accomplish the spiritual independence of the Slavs from German influence, and to deprive the Germans of their justification of conquests under the pretext of spreading Christianity. Religious independence from Germany was secured in Bohemia by Boleslav II in 973 through the foundation of a bishopric in Prague.

In this connection it must be emphasized that, notwithstanding these efforts, the spread of Christianity among the population was only slow and gradual. Thus many people embraced Christianity only outwardly, and in reality continued their pagan customs even as late as the thirteenth century. During the time of St. Adalbert (tenth century) and later, polygamy among the nobility flourished, blood-relatives intermarried, and fasts were not held. This also is confirmed by the contemporary Cosmas, who relates how the Czech prince Oldřich (1012-1037) married the peasant girl Božena, although he was married already, only because the first wife did not have any children. Cosmas adds: "It was then a custom to marry two or three wives, and it was not wrong if some man married the wife of another or if a woman married the husband of another." Even celibacy was not strictly adhered to (Cosmas himself, although a priest, had been married), and when in 1197 the papal nuncio, Peter, wanted to enforce it, he caused such a commotion among the clergy that he had to fly in a hurry. From the social point of view Christianity, it seems, accelerated the process of social division. If Christianity

secured an early hold on Bohemia, it was chiefly due to the political wisdom and foresight of Rostislav in Moravia and Bořivoj in Bohemia, and to the efforts of the apostles Cyril and Methodius who tried to make it popular by preaching it in the native Slav language. This naturally displeased the Germans, who used their influence in Rome, and both the apostles had in consequence to encounter a great deal of opposition and difficulties on the part of the Church. Methodius was summoned three times to Rome to justify his conduct, but, having vindicated himself, Slav worship was confirmed by Pope Adrian and Pope John VIII. After his death, however, German counsel prevailed, and Slav liturgy was abolished by the new Pope the same year (885), though no doubt it continued secretly. It was used, for instance, in the Sázava monastery, founded by Oldřich in 1030, but even this last stronghold was abolished in 1094. We will attempt to outline in a later chapter the extent to which religious life in Bohemia preserved a certain independence which accelerated the Czech Reformation. It seems, in any case, that the tradition of Slav liturgy long survived Methodius, since even during Charles IV, i.e. in the fourteenth century, it was publicly approved for some time. It is further known that many Waldensians found their refuge in Bohemia and Poland. Stránský says: "As the purity of Greek ritual was becoming corrupted amongst the people, either through the remains of paganism or by the influence of Latins, there arrived in Bohemia in 1176 several pious individuals, disciples of Peter Waldo, very commendable, not only on account of their piety, but also for their knowledge of the Scriptures. They joined the adherents of the Greek ritual, and modestly corrected by the Word of God the defects which they discovered in their worship."

This question of early Czech separatism from Rome is connected also with the Czech national consciousness, of which we shall have the opportunity to speak in the next chapter. Thus a story from the eleventh century tells us how a Czech noble stood up to Prince Vratislav because he wanted to appoint a German to the bishopric of Prague, and exhorted him to appoint rather a Czech, saying:

"Dost thou think a foreigner will love us more and wish us better than some one of us? Such is human nature that everybody, from whatsoever country he may come, loves his own nation better than others. Therefore we wish rather that a dog's or a donkey's tail should sit on this holy (bishop's) seat than a German."

The Great Moravian Empire acquired the greatest strength during the reign of **Svatopluk** in the second half of the ninth century, when it included the whole of Moravia and Slovakia as far as the Danube and Tisza, where it bordered on Bulgaria, and to the north as far as the rivers Sahle, Oder, and Vistula. Svatopluk further concluded an alliance with the Bohemian prince Bořivoj, whom Methodius had baptized. The Great Moravian Empire fell to pieces after Svatopluk's death (894) owing to the dissensions between his sons, and the centre of Czechoslovak history henceforward becomes Bohemia.

After 900 Greater Moravia succumbed to the Mongol Magyars. Moravia proper was soon liberated again, but Slovakia remained incorporated in the Hungarian State for a thousand years almost without interruption, except during the Hussite wars. "The invasion of the Magyars," says Palacký, "and their establishment in Hungary is one of the most important events in the history of Europe: it is the greatest misfortune that has befallen the Slav world during thousands of years."

At the same time the end of the tenth century marks also the real foundation of the Bohemian State. Constant wars with the Germans no doubt contributed incidentally greatly to this internal consolidation. The Czech prince became an almost absolute ruler in so far as the land was his personal property (*patrimonium*), but he always consulted the Diet before deciding on important questions. The Diet consisted first of a large number of free citizens, but soon it was limited only to certain classes, especially the nobility and officials. The first permanent basis of the Bohemian State was laid by Boleslav the Cruel and his brother Boleslav II (967-999); **Boleslav I** (936-967), whom Palacký calls one of the most powerful monarchs that ever occupied the Bohemian throne, succeeded in

consolidating Bohemia proper, and in freeing Moravia and a large part of Slovakia from Magyar rule. He established amicable relations with the Poles by arranging the marriage between his daughter Doubravka and the Polish prince Mieczyslav, thereby incidentally accelerating the conversion of Poland to Christianity, and laying foundations also of future amicable relations between the two Slav countries. During the reign of the two Boleslavs we see the nucleus of a new West Slav Empire, this time under the supremacy of Bohemia, which included also Moravia, the greater part of Silesia, and Galicia. From the year 1000 begins a new era for Bohemia. It marks the commencement of Czech civilization.

CHAPTER III

SECOND PERIOD OF BOHEMIAN HISTORY

FROM THE YEAR 1000 UNTIL THE HUSSITE MOVEMENT

IN the previous chapter we have shown the first attempts towards the formation of large West Slav Empires, of Samo, Rostislav, Svatopluk, and Boleslav. The eleventh century gave rise to a new form of a West Slav Empire, this time under Polish auspices. Prince **Boleslav the Brave**, the son of Mieczyslav and Doubravka, not only united all Poland, but conquered also Moravia. For a time even Bohemia itself fell under his rule owing to the incapability of the Bohemian Boleslav III and to domestic feuds between the various members of the Přemysl dynasty. Boleslav the Brave's Empire fell to pieces on his death in 1025, to revive under the auspices of the Bohemian Prince **Břetislav I** (1037-1055), called by Palacký "the restorer of Bohemia." Břetislav already before his accession to the throne had been successful in reuniting Moravia proper with Bohemia, ruled by his father Oldřich, against the rival claims of the Hungarian King Stephen. Through this, henceforward permanent, union was created the kernel of the Bohemian State. Later Břetislav enlarged his Empire by acquiring Silesia and large parts of Poland.

In this connection it should be observed that while Bohemia's wars against Poland or even Hungary during this period were not very frequent and usually had not conquest for their object, but were rather the outcome of personal dynastic rivalries or else wars caused through the vassalage to Germany, the German Empire continued to watch jealously every attempt at a strong Slav Power on its eastern frontier. Both Boleslav the Brave and

Břetislav were threatened by the Germans, to whom they had to yield at least partially. Břetislav was even forced to conclude a peace on the very unfavourable conditions of payment of tribute and loss of Poland.

His son **Vratislav** (1061-1092), under whom Slav liturgy still continued in the Sázava monastery, availed himself of the dissensions in Germany for strengthening the power of Bohemia. As a reward for supporting the Emperor against the Saxons and the Pope he obtained, for the first time in Bohemian history, the title of King, as well as some territorial concessions (Austria). At the same time the bonds by which Bohemia was bound to the German Empire were relaxed, for the tribute hitherto paid by Bohemian princes was permanently abolished, the only obligation on the part of Bohemia in future being the duty of sending 300 soldiers as auxiliaries in German expeditions. This had to be also later confirmed by the defeated Germans to **Soběslav** (1125-1140), who, moreover, was given the title of hereditary cup-bearer of the Empire with certain rights.

The title of king was conferred again on **Vladislav II** (1140-1173), one of the best rulers of the twelfth century, who took part in a crusade, and helped the German Emperor in his expeditions to Italy. His court was full of splendour, and art flourished during his reign. In his pride he began to ignore his connection with the Empire, and finally courted the Emperor's displeasure by renouncing of his free will the throne to his son. His reign was followed by new feuds in which the nobility, which had meanwhile developed into a real power, played an important rôle. Again Germany took the opportunity for enforcing her influence. An improvement came only with the accession of **Přemysl Otakar I** (1192-1230), on whom at last in 1198 was conferred the title of hereditary king. His reign, as well as that of his son **Venceslas I** (1230-1253), is characterized by a new consolidation of Bohemia. The transition from natural (bartering) to monetary economic conditions marks a great progress in this period, administration improves, and participation in government is conceded to the people, represented by the so-called Estates.

While the power of the Bohemian State thus grew and its consolidation developed, the south-eastern part of the Czechoslovak nation, the Slovaks were doomed to a barren existence under Hungary. It was especially after the accession of Stephen I (1001) that Hungary's nominal possession of Slovakia became real, and the definite frontier between Moravia and Hungary was fixed in 1031 by a treaty between Stephen and Břetislav. It is true that at that time Magyarization did not threaten the Slovaks, since the rulers of Hungary, the Magyars, were inferior in culture to the Slavs, from whom they took many terms relating to religion, politics, household, and agriculture. Stephen himself advised his son to be tolerant towards and to respect other nationalities, since he considered "a country with but a single language and custom feeble and fragile." For similar reasons as in Bohemia, the Hungarians began to call German colonists to towns in the twelfth century (during Geiza II). The official language of Hungary, nevertheless, remained Latin. And yet the separation of the Slovaks from the rest of the Bohemian and Moravian Slavs was detrimental, not only because it disunited politically a single nation, and caused the Czech and the Slovak to develop under different conditions, but chiefly because it left the Slovaks, both in the Middle Ages and later, without moral and material support. Already in their early history the Slovaks were deprived of the possibility of intellectual and political development such as the Czechs experienced under their own rulers, and the consequence of this fact even to-day contributes to many of the misunderstandings between the Czechs and the Slovaks. Only a partial compensation for the Slovaks was the temporary influence of the Prague University in the fourteenth century, and of the Hussite movement, which for a time gained ground also in Slovakia. Proofs are not lacking, however, that, even though they were in difficult circumstances, the Slovaks always, consciously or unconsciously, made attempts at emancipation through feudal revolts against the Hungarian king, the most formidable of which perhaps was the revolt of Matthias Čak at the beginning of the fourteenth century.

Since it is not the purpose of this book to relate the

already known details of Bohemian history, but rather to emphasize and show in a new light its most salient characteristics, we will now briefly refer to the reign of the last Bohemian kings of the Přemysl dynasty. As we have shown already, Bohemia was gradually gaining in political importance, but the internal peace of the country was undermined by German colonization, which began as early as the twelfth century. The reign of **Venceslas I** assured Bohemia great influence on the affairs of the Roman Empire. In 1241 Venceslas repulsed the Tartars, who previously defeated the Polish and Silesian princes at Liegnice, and in 1246 he secured for his son (Přemysl Otakar II) the throne of Austria. The greatest of the Přemysl kings, **Přemysl Otakar II** (1253-1278), called the "iron king," raised Bohemia to the rank of a great Power by acquiring Upper and Lower Austria, and later, through victorious battles against the Hungarian king Bela, Styria and Carinthia, as well as Carniola, Istria, and some North Italian towns. Through his crusades into Prussia and Lithuania he gained the Pope's favour. The summit of his power was reached in 1269, when it began to be menaced by Germany. The tragedy of the "iron king" lay in his effort to enlarge his dominions southwards, and to unite the Bohemian and Austrian lands, and to reconcile by his policy both the Germans and the Czechs. The union of Bohemia and Austria has ever been an impracticable proposition. In order to paralyse the influence of the nobles, to raise the commercial prosperity of the country, and to ingratiate himself with Germany, he called, in greater measure than his predecessors, German colonists to populate the outer districts and the towns. These towns and communities enjoyed a great deal of freedom and autonomy, which subsequently was conferred also upon Czech towns. Thus through trades and industries the general prosperity of the country was greatly raised. At the same time the culture of knighthood began to penetrate to Bohemia from the West, with its ideas of personal heroism and chivalry, and with new religious and artistic ideals. Yet through his Germanizing policy Přemysl Otakar II committed a grave error: he failed to convince Germany that he was

not a Slav ruler, and earned for himself the distrust and hate of a section of Bohemian nobility, which betrayed him when he was defending himself against the new German Emperor, Rudolf Habsburg, allied with the Hungarians. His tragic fall was followed by disastrous anarchy during the rule of the guardian of King Venceslas II, Otto of Brandenburg, and an improvement took place only when the new king nominally assumed the reins of government at the age of twelve, thanks to the statesmanship of Závěš of Falckenstein. When at last **Venceslas II** reached maturity he succeeded through careful diplomacy in gaining the support of the nobles, and he also ably continued, through mint reforms and other measures, the happy economic policy of his father. In foreign policy he was fortunate in gaining also the throne of Poland (1300), while for his son, Venceslas III, he secured the throne of Hungary. His vast dominions, whose centre was in Prague, extended from the Baltic to the Adriatic, and to the East far into Russia. His power, of course, again provoked the jealousy of the two inveterate enemies of Bohemia, the German Emperor and the Pope. They failed in their attempts to undermine his power, but his sudden death (1305) made an end to the greatness of Bohemia, and after the short reign of his sixteen-year-old son Venceslas, who died in 1306, the Přemysl dynasty became extinct.

Literature during this first Czech dynasty was rather scanty, since the rulers did almost nothing to promote native talent. The earliest writings are of a religious character, and bear testimony to the musical gifts of the Czechs. These writings included hymns, holy legends, and allegorical poems. The first Czech poetical work is an anonymous apotheosis of King Přemysl Otakar II, the *Alexandreis*, on the lines of a similar work by Philip Gautier de Chatillon. Its Christian and national character is obvious. Allusion has already been made to the chronicles of Cosmas and Dalimil. Of the two the first, written in Latin, is of greater value. Though not always accurate, and inclined, especially in regard to the early period, towards certain idealization, it is certainly superior to the contemporary chronicles of other countries. Cosmas, a dean of Prague, frankly admits the lack of

authority of the first part of his work, but displays throughout considerable critical faculty and knowledge of classic writings. The most valuable and accurate is the description of the social and political conditions of his own times (up to 1125). Dalimil's chronicle is a later work (ending 1310), and was written already during the reign of John of Luxemburg. It is rhymed and deserves notice as the first historical work written in Czech. The chronicle is largely founded on the work of Cosmas, and is written in a patriotic spirit. Thus, for instance, the preface concludes: "Of one thing I am fully certain: that I have the interests of my own nation much at heart. That has encouraged me in this work and roused my energies." He puts into the mouth of Prince Oldřich, who married the peasant girl Božena, the following words: "Rather would I marry a Czech peasant girl than I would take a German queen as my wife. Every heart clings to its own nation, therefore would a German woman less favour my language. A German woman will have German servants, and German will she teach her children. That would bring division of languages, and thereby ruin to the State." Unlike Palacký, who recognized Přemysl Otakar's efforts and merits, Dalimil strongly rebukes the "iron king," and blames him for unduly favouring the Germans: "The King began to heed no longer his own countrymen—towns and villages he began to give to Germans. The Germans appeared to surround him. Against the nobles he used violence . . . therefore many of them became angry and appealed to Rudolph, the Emperor, against him, saying: "'Tis better that the land should be a desert rather than that by the King's order the Germans should hold it."

We now pass to the last phase preceding the Czech Reformation, the reign of the Luxemburg dynasty. After the short reign of Rudolf of Habsburg (1306-1307), and Henry of Carinthia (1307-1310), who proved himself incapable of ruling the country and settling the civil war which had broken out between the German townsmen and the Czech nobility, **John of Luxemburg** (1310-1346) was elected to the throne.

The accession of the Luxemburgs meant a great change

for Bohemia. German influence was replaced by French influence, native art developed, and education progressed. The sometimes rather undignified dependence of Bohemia, both political and cultural, on her more powerful German neighbour, now almost disappears through improved relations with the Empire, and through the introduction of Western ideas. John was on good terms with Germany, since his father was German Emperor, while his son, Charles IV of Bohemia, himself became Roman Emperor.

John of Luxemburg, who married the daughter of Venceslas II at the age of fourteen, was a typical mediæval knight-errant. A fervent friend of French ideas and culture, he exercised a wholesome influence on Czech civilization by introducing a Western spirit, and thus checking and counterbalancing German influence. Native poetry, music, art, and literature began to flourish, and the State began to grow again. Bohemia's connection with Poland was definitely severed, but through the bartering of territories, such as prevailed generally in the Middle Ages, many territorial gains were made by King John and his son Charles, especially in Silesia, Lusatia, Brandenburg, and the Palatinate. During the reign of Charles IV (1346-1378), Bohemia becomes territorially the greatest State in Central Europe. Charles also settled the internal administration of the Bohemian State. The expression "the lands of the Bohemian Crown" begins then to be applied to the whole dominions, and to the State as a legal body, existing automatically and permanently without regard to the king or the Estates in whom the Constitution was vested. All outlying provinces were incorporated in and subject to the Bohemian Crown. The relation towards Germany was defined by Charles IV in his Golden Bull (1355) on the Order of the Election of Emperors. The Bohemian king became henceforward the foremost member (*Kurfürst*) of the German Empire, with a special political position and absolute internal independence. It is interesting that by the same Bull the other German *Kurfürsts* were instructed to have their sons taught the Slav language. This sudden growth of the importance of Bohemia is no doubt partly due also to the deplorable conditions then prevailing in

Germany and Italy, while France flourished under the Valois dynasty and England under the Plantagenets.

As a personality John of Luxemburg was of too romantic a nature to have been a great king, beyond the salutary influence due to his love of France. The aim of his life was chivalry, courage, and magnanimity, and these inclinations were no doubt strengthened in him both by lack of a strong guiding hand in his youth and by a disappointed family life. He therefore often sought adventure in foreign lands, especially in France, where he was adored, and for whom he fell in the Battle of Crecy, and he returned home usually when in need of money. And yet he was able to win fame for himself and territories for his kingdom. Three times he took part in crusades against Lithuania, and continued his adventures even after losing his eyesight. He left Bohemia greatly exhausted and in disorder, which state of affairs his son Charles began to remedy immediately on accession through wise reforms.

In **Charles IV**, called the "father of the nation" (*otec vlasti*), Bohemia found one of her greatest kings, and one who for his qualities had no equal among contemporary rulers. His great learning and piety, his love of art and his statesmanship, earned him an honourable place in European and Bohemian history. In political outlook Charles showed great wisdom by respecting the country's constitutional liberties, yet destroying many rampant abuses, civil as well as ecclesiastical. He re-established order and public security, abolished ordeals by fire or water and duels, built fortresses, organized finance, and extended municipal autonomy, thereby increasing trades and industries. The prosperity of the country grew also through improved agriculture, vine-growing (planting of Burgundy vines at Mělník), mining, and gardening. In foreign policy he had the interests of peace always foremost at heart, raised the political independence and prestige of Bohemia, and concluded favourable trade treaties with Venice, Hamburg, and Cracow.

His education abroad strengthened his independent personality, foresight, and wisdom as well as his love of art. Yet, although brought up in France, he was a Czech

patriot, and showed his understanding of the importance of education and spiritual development of Bohemia by promoting the works of native writers. His first interest always centred in Bohemia.

It was Charles IV who founded the Prague University in 1348 which gave the impulse to the Czech Reformation. His purpose is clear from the text of the Foundation Charter of the University: "Among the desires of his heart stood first the care that his Bohemian kingdom, which before all other countries he cherished, should abound in learned men as much as in worldly riches, that the faithful subjects of this kingdom who ever hunger for the fruits of beautiful arts should not in foreign lands beg for alms, but that they themselves should always have a table set for all, that they should not be forced to seek enlightenment in foreign parts of the world, but themselves enjoy the honour of inviting others to participate in such happiness." These were the words which Hus later invoked in the question of voting at the University, and which clearly show Charles's aim of making Prague the centre of culture for the whole Empire.

Among other things Bohemia is grateful to Charles IV for founding Karlsbad, and for building the beautiful castle Karlův Týn, the stone bridge in Prague, and the Gothic dome at the Prague Castle. Prague was enlarged by the New Town, whereby its population was trebled and its overwhelming majority became Czech. Slav liturgy was again being introduced in the Church. Thanks to his friendship with the Pope, Charles succeeded in having the Bishopric of Prague raised to the rank of Archbishopric, independent of German archbishops. The Archbishop of Prague was at the same time Papal Legate for all Northern countries.

Architects, painters, goldsmiths, learned men, students, and artists from all parts of Europe, especially from Italy, came to Prague, and native art flourished. Prague became not only the political, but also the spiritual, Mecca of Central Europe, and ranked favourably even with the centres of Western Europe, such as Paris and Avignon. Thus Charles did for Bohemia, and more especially for Prague, what Augustus did for Rome.

It is natural also that native Czech literature developed, especially considering Charles IV chose the Czech language even in official use in preference to Latin or German. Charles himself wrote his autobiography (up to 1340) with remarkable literary skill, displaying a spirit of Christian humility. He promoted especially historical and theological writings. Thus he engaged Přebík Pulkava as Court historian to write a new chronicle of Bohemia, in which work he himself collaborated. He further had the Cosmas chronicle copied and translated into Czech. Other historians in those times were Beneš z Veitmile (up to 1374) and Beneš z Hořovic (chronicle of Roman Emperors). Still nearer to his heart were theological writings. The Bible he knew by heart, and he himself wrote a biography of St. Venceslas in Latin. With the aid of Archbishop Ernest of Pardubice he had a "Passional" written, containing also the lives of Cyril and Methodius and of St. Prokop. A very good Life of Jesus Christ was written in Czech at his instigation. The real interest he took in religious matters is further proved by his invitation to Prague of Conrad Waldhauser and the protection he afforded to Milič.

Important legal writings of this period have been preserved, including the *Maiestas Carolina*, a collection of criminal and civil laws, further *Coronation Rules*, and a *Commentary of the Bohemian Law* by Ondřej z Dubé.

As to poetry, we may mention lyric religious writings, such as the *St. Catherine Legend*, rich both in contents and in form. It describes the struggle of Christianity against Paganism with good characterization of persons and other details. There are a number of other similar works: the *Legend of St. Margaret and of St. Prokop*, a translation of the *Legenda Aurea*, and the *Life of Jesus Christ* by St. Bonaventura, etc. A man of great talent was Smil Flaška z Pardubic, author of the *Father's Advice to His Son*, *The New Counsel*, and a collection of proverbs. In the first work he gives the following advice to young Bohemian nobles: "Be liberal as far as it is seemly and do not by shabbiness injure your soul. Neither must you come to ruin by too great a liberality. Moderation is honourable in all things. . . . To be too haughty, O my son, or to

impose your will on the people, that I by no means advise." Of a different character is the *New Gounsel* (*Nová Rada*), a satirical allegorical poem, in which political ideas are put into the mouths of animals representing certain persons or certain classes.

The religious writings already bear traces of, and allusions to, the religious conditions of those times. Thus we find rebukes that the people should lead a better life according to the laws of God, that they should not indulge in vice, and that the clergy also should devote their lives more to the service of God. The prosperity during Charles IV led to a certain relaxation of morals, which was only intensified by the corruption of the Church. It is true that this was the golden time for the Church, and that the Pope's power gained in strength as never before: Numerous churches were being built, monasteries abounded in wealth, and the Church had an absolute control of the State and the schools. But beneath this apparent power lay a great moral corruption which spread not only among the people, but also among the clergy. The priests were lazy, avaricious, and immoral. Simony and the selling of indulgences flourished.

In 1358 **Conrad Waldhauser** was invited by King Charles to Prague from Vienna to preach to the people against the general decay. He was one of the prophets and forerunners of John Hus who prepared the ground for the Czech Reformation.

Another was Jan **Milič** z Kroměříže, at first an official in King Charles's Chancery, at whose head was John Středa, a friend and admirer of Petrarch. Later Milič became canon and archdeacon of the St. Vit Cathedral at the Prague castle, but he renounced all his dignities in order to devote himself wholly to preaching. Unlike Waldhauser, who was a German, Milič preached in Czech, and thus became more popular, especially in view of his own exemplary spotless and ascetic life. He ate no meat and drank no wine and fasted often, which was perhaps the cause of the hallucinations during which the coming of the Antichrist was revealed to him. Milič was taciturn and spent whole nights in prayer and meditation, but in his sermons he was both eloquent and outspoken against all the vices of

the times, especially those of the clergy, and he did not hesitate even to exhort Charles IV himself to his face, calling him an antichrist. For this he was imprisoned, but the broad-minded Emperor soon gave him freedom again. Whoever came into contact with him felt elevated. Thus Štítný says that he "preached with great ardour so that his strong spirit spoke by God's grace, and he uttered many fiery words." His personality was apostolic, and, as Palacký says, he possessed "freshness of sentiment and imagination, a deep though over-sensitive religiousness, great refinement, and stubborn courage." For his frankness he was hated, especially by the monks, who complained of him to the Pope, finding fault, for instance, with his practical steps of saving fallen women, for whom he opened an asylum. Milič went readily to Rome in 1367, and in the absence of the Pope was promptly put in prison by the monks. There he had new visions, and wrote his great treatise on the coming of the Antichrist (*Libellus de Antichristo*), which he saw chiefly in the corruption of the Church. The remedy he saw in a quick and deep reform through the medium of a general council. The Pope, Urban V, most probably on the advice of his brother, the Albanian Cardinal Anglicus Grimaud, released Milič, who then returned to Prague. This was not the end of his troubles, however, as he had to struggle continuously against the intrigues of the monks, and was called to Avignon in 1374, where he nevertheless succeeded again in convincing the cardinals of his innocence.

His work was continued by a third prophet and Milič's disciple, **Matěj z Janova** (Matthew of Genoa), perhaps the most interesting of John Hus's forerunners, who might have had a far greater influence had he been a preacher and, above all, had he shown more strength of character. He studied six years in Paris, and was, therefore, also known as the Parisian Master. From 1381 he was Canon in Prague. Though scarcely a preacher, he was a prolific writer, but unfortunately only some of his works have been preserved, and some have often been wrongly attributed either to Hus or to Wycliffe. Matthew went very far in his ideas, certainly farther than Hus himself. He advocated a far-

reaching Church reform, rejecting all worship of images, holding that communion should be taken in both kinds, and favouring generally the return to the conditions of the original early Christian life. In his collected writings (*Regulæ Veteris et Novi Testamenti*) he declares: "I have in these my writings principally used the Bible, and but little the sayings of learned doctors, because through it and its divine truths, which are clear and manifest in themselves, all opinions are more solidly confirmed, more stably founded, and meditated on more usefully." He gives the following reason for advocating Church reform: "It appears to me that it is necessary for the purpose of re-establishing peace and union in the Christian community, to eradicate all weeds, to condense the Word of God on earth again, and to bring back Jesus Christ's Church to its original salutary condition, retaining but few regulations, and those only that date from the time of the Apostles. . . . Ceremonies and traditions shall be totally abolished and destroyed, while our Lord Jesus shall be exalted." The tragic misfortune of Matthew z Janova was that when called upon he recanted, thereby forfeiting his reputation, influence, and popularity.

But perhaps the greatest man that Bohemia of the fourteenth century produced was **Thomas Štítný** (Tomáš ze Štítného), born about 1331, the first great Czech philosopher and founder of Czech philosophic prose. He was influenced both by Waldhauser and by Milič. To the latter he pays homage by saying that without him he perhaps would not have written his works. For Bohemia specially he is of interest since he wrote in Czech at a time when it was usual to write in Latin, thereby courting the displeasure of the University. He explains the reason for writing in Czech thus: "Those who blame Czech books, wishing perhaps alone to appear learned, will do well to fear God's vengeance, and to remember how guilty are those who would stop letters and needful messages contained therein. . . . Is it not better in castles and elsewhere to read in Czech, and in those moments to aspire nearer to God, and forget sinful thoughts and quarrels? . . . Even St. Paul, when writing epistles, wrote them in the

language of the people: Jewish for the Jews, Greek for the Greeks." But for Europe his writings are of no less interest for the ideas they contain, Štítný being a philosopher in the spirit of contemporary scholastics. Like Milič Štítný was opposed to the immorality of the clergy, which he contrasted with the evangelic life of the apostles. As a democrat he wrote his books in a comprehensive, lucid style in the native tongue. As an enlightened philosopher he was against all superstitions, against witchery, astrology, as well as against social privileges of the high clergy and nobility who held the peasants in bondage. He aimed at a more human and just Christian life, and at a better co-operation among men. His best-known work is that on "General Christian Matters," consisting of six books, partly theological, partly philosophic. From the preface we learn that Štítný laid great stress on the Bible, describing the Holy Scriptures as "letters sent to us from our home: for our home is Heaven."

Leaving aside the theological parts of the book, we will quote some passages from the second and third books (*Of Virgins, Widows, and Married People, and Of the Master of the Family, the Mistress, and the Household*) as characteristic of Štítný's ideas on morality in general: "To those maidens who seek a husband, and to bachelors also, I give this advice, that every young man should preserve himself for his bride free from all impurity as completely as she does for him. For it is God's law that no man shall outside the bonds of matrimony commit any offence with any woman. It is necessary that those who wish to marry should all seek their equals so that inequality shall not cause discord and displeasure. If you are young, beware of old people, and everybody of noble birth should seek his equal. If an old man marries someone younger, he will ever fear that his young wife does not love him." The relations between a Bohemian noble and his servants is described in the third book thus: "Every landowner is the master of his servants, and he should restrain them from everything that is evil. He should first attempt this by kindness, and if he cannot at once put a stop to evil habits, he should endeavour to do so gradually." Some-

what amusing are his remarks on the vanity of the female sex of those times: "St. John tells us that if a man has a dissipated wife, he should not forbid her everything at a time, lest she become refractory, but from those things that are, as it were, most serious let him first try to dissuade her. If she paints herself, remark before her what a shameful thing it is to grease yourself in a nasty manner, or to cram the hair of others on the head. . . . While wishing to appear young, such women become aged in consequence of such painting."

The best philosophic work of Štítný is the *Řeči Besední* (*Learned Entertainments*), displaying the author's great knowledge of Aristotle and the scholastic writers. As an attempt to reconcile religion to science through the definition of God, it deserves more than a passing notice. It is written in such a remarkably lucid manner that, as Lützwow observes, "it is perhaps doubtful whether any other language had at that period arrived at a sufficient degree of development to produce a similar work on subjects which mediæval custom reserved to the Latin language." Palacký speaks equally highly of Štítný, saying that "a nation which produced and understood such writers as Štítný could not henceforward be called barbaric." The most interesting part of the book deals with the subject of Beauty: "The Wisdom of God as it is revealed to us in the beauty and splendour of Creation." To the question of "What is God?" Štítný gives the following answer: "Our intellect cannot err in believing that God exists. All creation proclaims that God is the Creator. For nothing has been made of itself. Therefore all men, whether heathens, Jews, Christians, heretics, or philosophers, hold something as being God. But what God is, that the mind of men cannot fathom. Therefore it can be said that God is the ineffable Supreme Being, than Whom nothing better, nothing more blissful and majestic, can be imagined, nor, indeed, anything equally as good, blissful, or majestic. For herein He rises above all comprehension, above all minds of men and angels: He is always more excellent than anyone can express or imagine. Thus you will be able to ascertain what God is not, but you cannot attain

to the knowledge of what He is." Indeed, a remarkably advanced and philosophic view.

In this manner was being prepared the ground for the coming of the Czech Reformation. It only now remains to add a few words about the successor of Charles IV, his son Venceslas IV, ere we commence to deal with the course of events that followed the birth of Master John Hus.

Venceslas IV (1378-1419) had few, if any, of the high qualities which distinguished his father. Though kind-hearted and generous, he sadly lacked in strength of will and independence, and often acted rashly in a temper or under the influence of drink. And yet he was beloved by the Czech people, who forgave him a great deal on account of his great kindness of heart and his keen sense of justice. During his reign the Czechs came more and more into their own, and to his lasting credit stands the Decree of Kutná Hora (1409), issued chiefly on the advice of John Hus, by which the Czechs were given three votes at the Prague University as against one vote of the foreign nationals, whereby the hitherto existing relation was reversed. Another most important reform introduced by King Venceslas provided for all Decrees of the Court and Government, hitherto published mostly either in Latin or in German, to be in future published in the Czech language. Venceslas did not himself rule all his possessions, but shared the Government with his brothers: John Henry had Moravia, Sigismund and John had partly Brandenburg, partly Eastern Lusatia, while Venceslas himself ruled over Bohemia proper, Western Lusatia, and some Silesian principalities. Only later did he acquire direct rule also over Moravia, Luxembourg, and Eastern Lusatia. Internal dissensions in Bohemia and quarrels between the members of the dynasty (King Venceslas was taken prisoner by the Lords' League, and later also by his brother Sigismund) weakened the Bohemian State, so that Venceslas IV was at last deposed from the throne of the Empire (1400) which he hitherto occupied. As to Sigismund's possessions, it is interesting to observe that he pawned and later sold Brandenburg (1415) to Frederick Hohenzollern, whereby were laid the foundations to the subsequent power of the

Hohenzollerns, which proved so formidable not only to Bohemia but to the whole world. Of Sigismund himself the Czechs have good cause to have evil memories.

The reign of King Venceslas marks the commencement of the Hussite movement, one of the most glorious periods of Bohemian history, to which we have devoted the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

JOHN HUS

TO Bohemia John Hus is more than a religious reformer : he is the national hero, the Great Prophet, the Zoroaster or Mahomed of the Czechs. His life, not unlike, in lofty idealism and courage as well as in dramatic details and martyrdom, that of the great prophets of the past, is even to-day a source of inspiration to the Czechs, while of the Hussite wars they are proud as of the most glorious periods of their history.

But John Hus does not belong to Bohemia alone. Through the moral courage of his convictions and of his ideas, and through the influence he exercised, he merits one of the foremost places amongst the forerunners of the modern idea of freedom of thought. This was rightly emphasized by the late French scholar Ernest Denis, who once declared without hesitation, on being asked whether he knew that he would have been burnt for his work on the Hussites had he lived in the Middle Ages : " Yes, and I also know that I have only to thank the Hussites that I shall not be burnt to-day."

The direct causes of the Hussite movement were of a religious, social, and national character. Among the first causes was the corruption of the Church, which had also led elsewhere, especially in England, to reform movements. This corruption was then worse than ever. The apparent object of the Church of Rome since the time of Constantine having chiefly been worldly political power, the growing neglect of spiritual matters resulted in complete moral decay. The general confusion among Christians was only increased when two Popes, later three, declared themselves simultaneously to be the infallible representatives of Jesus Christ.

Already in the twelfth century Bishop Belagius regretted that "gold repressed love in the Church, and everybody in the Church strove only after dignities, not after piety." Forgotten were all contrary teachings of Christ, Who declared that His Kingdom was not of this world and that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God. No wonder the poor peasants and other laymen were forbidden to read the Bible, which says: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust does corrupt and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven." And again: "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" All men are equal according to the Bible, since God does not judge according to wealth, but according to good deeds, preferring the poor beggar Lazarus picking crumbs that fell from the table of the rich man to the rich man himself. The immorality of the clergy, especially of the monks and nuns, was such that truly could it be said that they were like the "whited sepulchres which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness." Last but not least, the increasing number of ceremonies and the worship of holy pictures and relics was also against the spirit of the Bible, which says: "The hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." The increasing number of dogmas turned the minds of believing Christians back to the Bible as the only source of faith, in the words of St. John the Divine: "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this Book: if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book."

The wealth of the Pope, clergy, and nobility contrasted strangely with the slavery and poverty of the peasantry. The Church in Bohemia possessed one-third of all the land. The Prague Archbishop alone possessed 400 towns and villages. On the other hand, the peasants became more and more the personal property of their masters. Against this social oppression Hus preached as strongly as Wycliffe.

Also Štítný, a democrat, protested that even if the fields belonged to the master, the man should belong to God alone. Herein lies one of the reasons why the Hussite movement became so popular, all-national, and democratic.

Although the Hussite wars in their origin and character were religious, yet the national aspect must not be lost sight of in so much as John Hus himself, like Milič and Štítný, was a great patriot. As the Hussite movement was generally accepted only by the Czechs, it became *via facti* a defensive campaign of the Czech nation against the rest of Europe. It is important that from the first it was only the Czech Professors at the Prague University who approved of Wycliffe, while the Germans stood by the Church. The Hussite movement assumed an anti-German and anti-Hungarian character, the more so as even before there was a natural resentment against the German colonists who formed the majority of many towns in Bohemia, and who had a deciding influence even in the University until the Decree of Kutná Hora. We will later mention also the anti-Hungarian campaign of the Hussites in the defence of Slovakia.

Among the other factors which facilitated the Czech movement was the ancient tradition of a certain independence from Rome, and an aversion against the Church as an instrument of Germanization. Furthermore, there was the influence of John Wycliffe and the Waldensians. The soil for the work of John Hus was naturally fertilized also by his predecessors, Waldhauser, Milič, Matěj z Janova, Štítný, and others of whom we spoke in the last chapter.

Opinions differ as to the preservation of Greco-Slav tradition in Bohemia. Palacký thinks it unfounded that this tradition had been preserved for centuries. It would, of course, be foolish to assert, as was taught in some Russian schools, that the Hussite movement was of an Orthodox Russian character. Yet it cannot be overlooked that the tradition of Slav liturgy and Church song was strong enough to be renewed during Charles IV's reign in the Emausy Monastery in Prague. Even if the hierarchy was Roman since the eleventh century, among the people the memories of Cyril and Methodius lived strong. On the

other hand, it must be admitted that the performance of Slav liturgy was not considered incompatible with the teachings of Rome until Gregory VII forbade it, and Břetislav II expelled the Slav monks and burnt their books to the detriment of our history and literature.

That the Czechs were never good Catholics may be seen from the Bull of Alexander IV, who in 1237 exhorted Přemysl Otakar II to repress heresy in his lands. Another proof of the presence of Slav tradition in Bohemia is the readiness with which the Czechs accepted Communion under both kinds. This Slav custom, forbidden by the Church for two hundred years, had already been insisted on by Matěj z Janova as a matter of course, and later renewed by Jakoubek ze Stříbra with the approval of Hus. Hus himself, apparently, did not lay too much stress on this point, which, however, became quickly popular and formed one of the foremost postulates of the Hussites, whose country was therefore aptly characterized as the country of the Book and the Cup. "The Cup," says Ernest Denis, "was the symbol of the purging of the Temple, the Saviour reinstalled upon His throne, the liberty of God's truth regained, paradise re-opened, sin eradicated, the commonwealth purified, enemies defeated, victory of the national tongue achieved—all this was implied in the firm resolve not to forsake the Chalice in spite of any sufferings."

The Hussites were no doubt anxious to renew the Slav tradition, and studied with great zeal the Greek Church Fathers. In 1450 the Hussites replied to Eneas Sylvius's accusations of heresy in regard to communion under both kinds: "In this matter we do not follow our own opinion, but that of the Apostles and of the Greeks." On being excommunicated during the same year from the Church by the Florentine Council, they sent a deputation to Constantinople asking for admission into the Greek Church, and their request was favourably received by the Patriarch, who expressed his fullest approval of and sympathies with them. But although Jerome of Prague lived for some time also in Pskov and Vitebsk, where he frequented the Russian Church, it cannot be said either of him or of

John Hus that they taught consciously or unconsciously any fundamental teachings of the Russian Orthodox Church. We have mentioned already the prejudice which has always existed in Bohemia against the Church of Rome on account of its Germanizing policy. The Germans and Magyars often identified their plans of conquest with the interests of the Roman Church. In this way the Germans succeeded in extirpating the Slavs of the Elbe, and we have also mentioned their intrigues against Cyril and Methodius. Even in the fifteenth century prayers were read in Germany for victory against "the heathens of Novgorod and Moscow." During the Hussite movement the Germans more than other nations co-operated with Rome.

As regards the question of the Waldensians, they found a ready welcome and refuge in Bohemia, Peter Waldo himself among them. John Hus knew of their teachings, and one of the accusations put forward against him was the charge of having assisted them. Also later the Hussites (Prokop the Great) pleaded in favour of the Waldensians in Basel in 1433, when admonishing the Church not to prosecute people for their convictions. The Waldensians denied the Pope's authority in religious matters, which, they held, may be decided not by man, but only by the Word of God. They claimed direct descent from the primitive Christian Church, but otherwise their teachings were not very original, and in any case had little influence on the origin and development of the Hussite movement. After all, they were but few, and as foreigners unable to spread their views; while, on the other hand, the Hussite movement was deeper in spirit and acquired a national character.

Of far greater importance was the influence of Wycliffe, though John Hus himself never approved of all his teachings, and the Czech movement developed independently of the Lollards. Friendly relations between England and Bohemia developed, especially when Anne, the daughter of Charles IV, married Richard II. She brought the Czech Bible with her to England and is said to have been favourably inclined towards the Lollards. Czech students, including the fellow martyr and friend of John Hus, Jerome of Prague, studied at Oxford. Wycliffe's books were most probably brought

to Bohemia by them, as well as by some Lollards who came to Bohemia (James and Conrad of Canterbury, Peter Payne), and by the attendants of Queen Anne on their return home after her death. The philosophic works of Wycliffe were known in Bohemia already at the end of the fourteenth century, and were admired even then by Hus. But Hus did not become acquainted with Wycliffe's theological writings until he became Rector of the Prague University in 1402. Wycliffe's views fascinated him, and he was especially impressed with his criticism of the clergy, his opposition to the Pope, and his insistence on the Bible as the sole source of authority. During the discussions at the University in 1403, the Czechs sided with Wycliffe, the Germans against, and as the latter were then formally in the majority owing to the method of voting, Wycliffe was condemned. Hus approved in general of Wycliffe, but his wisdom and moderation forbade him to accept such teachings as were in flagrant contradiction to the dogmas of the Church, as he thought that no useful purpose in the cause of Reformation would be served thereby. Thus he did not approve of Wycliffe's theory of transubstantiation. Wycliffe held, against the Church, that bread and wine remained bread and wine in Holy Communion and was not transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ, which dogma he considered, as a realist and an admirer of Aristotle, mere superstition. In the same way he also condemned most of the other Sacraments. His main teaching consisted in the theory that the Church is not a community of baptized, but a community of the predestined by God for salvation as against the *praesciti* condemned to perdition, the predestined for salvation being those people who lived according to the laws of Christ. Wycliffe was against all ceremonies and against the worship of saints, against the Pope as the head of the Church and in favour of poverty. Hus concurred that the corruption of the Church was mainly due to its worldly possessions, which ought to be abolished, and declared: "I am moved by his (Wycliffe's) love of Christ's laws, since, according to him, not a single letter of them could deceive."

Like Štítný, Hus was also impressed by classic writers.

His views on philosophic subjects may be seen from the following quotations: "To live rightly are the words of the great Cato. For he who rightly lives, lives well, and he who lives well lives so that he will never die . . . He who follows his lustful passions is an animal, but he who lives according to his reason is a reasonable man . . . Learn, for if you do not your life will be like death, as the learned Cato says, and you need knowledge, learning, and life. . . . Beware of carelessness, despise pride, preserve peace, be meek, and you will be safe. Virtue is a difficult accomplishment, remaining often in solitude and alone guiding the morals. If you can rule yourself, truly you will be a king. Correct the past, arrange the present, and prepare for the future: reason shall rule, the will must obey. . . 'Tis better to be vanquished speaking the truth than vanquish lying.'" (From the *Academic Speeches of John Hus*.) "The soul consists of three things with which it thinks of God, and by which it knows and demands Him: the memory, the reason, and the will. . . . Conscience is self-knowledge. A man should beware of too broad or too narrow a conscience, for a too broad conscience considers often evil things good, sin as no sin, thereby courting condemnation in the words of the Gospel: 'Woe to them who call evil good and good evil.' Also a man should beware of too narrow a conscience, for that leads to despair, leading him to think he is too bad. He does not regret his sins, and never does well, and thinks that good is evil." (Hus, *Dcerka*.) The views of Hus on social conditions and on relations between man and woman do not as a rule differ much from the prevalent Christian idea; the highest caste in his opinion were the priests, then the king and the nobility, and finally the peasants. Man is the bearer of power, and his wife and children should obey him. Characteristic of the times is his scepticism of the virginity of unmarried women: "About virgins 'tis better not to speak. True, a virgin should not be rebuked. But as to who is a virgin nowadays, how are we to know? A woman preserves her good name as long as her offspring or her tongue does not betray her. That I know that I have never known a man so struck with the desire for a woman as women are for

men. A woman, on seeing a man in the church whom she had loved, at once faints, fulfilling the words of the Song of Solomon: 'My soul failed when he spake.' And thus was also fulfilled the song of the nun, saying: 'I faint when I see my beloved not.' " Hus speaks further strongly against the immorality of widows, married women, and of men who obey their wives. But more than married women he blames married men, who, he says, are much more often unfaithful. Higher than everything, Hus valued a moral life, and though a friend of science and a promoter of Church song and music, he condemns all science and art which disturbs the mind of man in his relation to God. He prefers a simple peasant to the most learned scholar or the most famous artist who forgets his foremost duty—to live up to the Gospel. Such were Hus's chief views which the Hussites accepted for their own, replacing moral laxity by earnest piety, and dissipation and luxury by utmost simplicity.

The great number of works which exist on John Hus in the English language makes it unnecessary for me to repeat the details of his life. He was born about 1370, and rose quickly to fame. In 1396 he became Master of Free Arts; in 1400 he was ordained priest; and in 1402 he reached the summit of his academic distinctions as Rector of the Prague University. Then follow his first struggles for Wycliffe and his agitation against miraculous relics and against immorality among the clergy. Once more Hus becomes Rector, in 1409, this time on the unanimous wish of the Czech nation, who by then, through the Decree of Kutná Hora, became masters of their University. The King was on the whole favourably inclined to the movement, calling priests "the most dangerous of all comedians," and only later became alarmed and turned against Husitism. In 1409 the first accusations of heresy against Hus were formulated by his adversaries, charging him with preaching against the Archbishop, the Clergy, and the Germans, and pointing out his public approval of Wycliffe. These accusations were easy for Hus to face, but the great storms which ensued in Prague against the sale of indulgences and the continued dissensions between the King, who sided

with Hus, and the Archbishop, who proclaimed a state of interdict, induced Hus, who meanwhile had been excommunicated, to leave Prague in 1412, and to preach in the country, where he also wrote his greatest Czech and Latin works. His influence grew, since public speaking was in the Middle Ages, when newspapers were unknown, the only medium of gaining public opinion. All over the country people began to accept Hus's ideas. Finally the King's brother Sigismund, King of Hungary and Emperor of Germany, summoned Hus to a Church Council in Constance, promising him a safe conduct. In October 1414 Hus left Bohemia, accompanied only by a few friends, well aware that it was his last journey, since in a farewell letter to his followers he wrote: "And should my death be to His glory and your welfare, may He accord it to me to face it without fear." In Constance he was almost immediately on his arrival put in prison, where he suffered great physical hardships. Added to these were the spiritual tortures to which he was subjected during the unfair proceedings of the Council, who brought accusations against him which were either quite false or else based on mutilated quotations, and who would not even listen to his defence. His death sentence, despite the Emperor's safe conduct, was a foregone conclusion. If he were to remain faithful to his great ideal Hus could not recant. He could not admit the fallacy of doctrines he never taught, and he was open to be convinced of the fallacy of what he held to be the Truth. He knew no fear, being convinced that "'tis better to die well than to live a bad life." "Nobody should sin for fear of death, for he who speaks the truth breaks his head, and he who fears death loses the joys of life. Truth vanquishes all, for he who is being killed for the sake of Truth gains victory." His friends advised him: "If you admit your guilt, do not hesitate to recant, but if your conscience tells you that you are not guilty, then do not deny the truth, but hold on to it unto death." Touching is the last letter of Hus to his friends, in which he implores them to pray for his enemies, to love each other, not to let the good be oppressed, and to accord the truth to everybody. In another letter he thus prays to God: "Why hast Thou abandoned me, O Lord?

For many dogs have surrounded me, many spoke angrily against me without any reason. Instead of taking care of me, they robbed me and repaid with evil my kind deeds and with hate my love of them." On hearing the death sentence, Hus knelt down and prayed in a loud voice: "Lord Jesus, forgive my enemies, for they have borne false witness against me." For the last time he refused to recant, saying: "Behold, these Bishops demand that I shall recant. If I complied I would be false in the eyes of God and sin against my own conscience and the Divine truth, seeing that I have never taught what has been falsely charged against me. In the truth I have proclaimed according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, I will this day joyfully die." And remembering the words of Christ that "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father Who is in Heaven," Hus fearlessly ascended the stake and was burnt to death on July 6, 1415. "His truthful voice had to be burnt out of this world," says Thomas Carlyle. His body was destroyed, but his spirit will live for ever.

One of the greatest controversies in Bohemia has been the question as to whether Hus was a good Catholic or not. Some Catholic writers (Lenz, Šulc, Helfert) try to uphold the sentence of Constance; others again, for the sake of the prestige of the Catholic Church in Bohemia, where Hus is a national hero, try to prove that he was really a good Catholic. Eminent Protestants of course, including Luther himself, consider him one of their ranks. We will not discuss the view whether the Council was right in burning him: that was obviously opposed not only to all modern principles of justice and freedom of religion, but also to the teachings of Christ Himself, although comparatively recently the Catholic writer Lépiciér wrote, "Those who make the State responsible for the death of a heretic are wrong as well as those who timidly admit that in such cases the Church surpassed its rights. Just as it is not wrong to kill a wild beast, especially if it causes damage, so it also may be a good deed to deprive of a harmful life a heretic, a destroyer of God's truth, and an enemy of other people's salvation." How strangely this

contrasts with the words of the Bible about our duty to forgive our brethren who have sinned against us, or with other Christian principles of love, and of non-resistance to evil and violence. But we are chiefly concerned with the question as to how far Hus was a Protestant. We have mentioned that he never attacked any of the chief dogmas of the Church like Wycliffe, and therefore he can hardly be called a Protestant from a strictly theological point of view. The Church, for this reason, could very well have quashed the verdict of the Council of Constance as it quashed a similar verdict in the case of Joan of Arc. Probably it would have done so when the Hussite wars were over, had it understood how deep was the influence of John Hus, and how this influence would later facilitate the Czechs' conversion to Lutheranism. But the Church felt that he was Protestant in spirit: he challenged the authority of the Pope, and of the Church itself, by relying solely upon the Bible, and, unlike St. Joan, he gave rise to the first serious schism in the Church. He became Protestant by appealing from the verdict of the Church to his own conscience and to Jesus Christ. Furthermore, though underestimating the importance of dogmas, he went far deeper than the mere surface of formalities and theologic details by demanding of everyone to live up to the words of the Gospel. He was even ready to die for what he believed to be the Truth, for his own conviction. And even if he did not recognize his reason as an absolute judge in religious matters, which could hardly be expected from a man who lived in the Middle Ages, his views were nevertheless revolutionary for his times, and make him a true companion of Luther and Calvin, a forerunner of the modern idea of freedom of thought, and a protagonist of the lofty ideal of a perfectly moral and conscientious life, such as may even to-day serve as a worthy example to others. "Seek the truth, know the truth, respect the truth, hold the truth unto death," was his motto. Herein lies also the reason for the relationship between the Czech and Swiss reformation. Neither the Czech (Hussite, Bohemian Brethren) nor the Swiss Reformation was of a dogmatic, scholastic nature, but rather of the nature of an attempt

to a return to the early Christian life. This implied also the democratization of the Church, the return to the Bible, and the free preaching of the Word of God. According to the Hussites, all men were God's children, and they therefore called each other brothers, and were inspired by sheer altruism and brotherly Slav spirit of love and reciprocity. Undoubtedly the ideal of Hus, like that of Calvin, was of a democratic Church, even though Calvin was a better Protestant from a strictly theological point of view.

As to Luther's opinion on Hus, we know that in 1520 he was so amazed at the similarity of his own views and those of Hus that he declared that he had been advocating Hus's teachings, and that he and his associates were all Hussites without knowing it. Already, as a student at Erfurt, Luther was surprised that a man who expounded the Gospel so seriously should have been burnt as a heretic. In a preface to a Latin edition of Hus's *Treatise on the Church*, published in Wittenberg in 1520, Luther calls on the Church to admit that it had done wrong in burning Hus, and speaks of Hus as a holy martyr. The Council of Constance, according to Luther, has exposed itself to derision and ridicule for raving against that pious man, for everyone of sane mind would confess that John Hus was adorned with great and excellent gifts from the Holy Spirit : " If he, who, in the agony of death, invoked Jesus, the Son of God, Who suffered on our behalf, and gave Himself up to the flames with such faith and constancy for the sake of Christ, if he did not show himself a brave and worthy martyr of Christ, then may scarcely anyone be saved."

Besides Hus's opposition to the Pope and his insistence on the Scriptures as the only source of Christian truth, it is his disdain of ceremonies which makes him worthy of the name of a prophet, for according to Carlyle all prophets rebel above all against idolatry : Moses broke up the Golden Calf and Daniel denounced the legend of Baalem. John Hus, too, was against idolatry, which, he says, " has soiled the majority of Christians." He was, therefore, in favour of the greatest possible simplification of ceremonies and of a deeper faith. Thus about prayers he says : " In vain does your tongue work if your heart does not pray. You

do not need to pray in the Church but within yourself, but before you must also be pure as a Church." For the same reasons he advocated also prayers and Church songs in the vernacular. True members of the Church may, according to Hus, be discerned only by deeds, and the true Church is invisible. His opposition to the infallible authority of the Pope and the Church was, however, the chief reason of his tragic death. He especially disapproved of the Pope's worldly, political power, and he blamed the Church for perpetrating violence against the laws of Christ. "The Pope," says Hus, "is not a God on earth, but a sinful man, and if he lives against the laws of Christ, then he is not a holy man, but an antichrist. Wrong are those who hold that the Pope cannot err and that all should obey him, because he can send either to heaven or to hell whoever he chuses. I am acting as the Lord's attorney against the Pope." Against the authority of the Pope he placed the Bible as supreme: "Only Christ is the rock on which the Church is built. The Gospel is my foundation and my food which strengthens my spirit to stand undaunted against all the foes of Truth." How revolutionary were these views at a time when the Bible was still a forbidden book to the laymen, and translations into living languages were seldom allowed! The Bible became henceforward the chief weapon and source of strength to religious reformers, who found in it a wealth of moral principles and an inspiration for their efforts.

Hus always acted as a good Czech and democrat by promoting the use of Czech in prayers and hymns. It grieved him greatly that the German colonists should often be at an advantage in comparison with the Czechs: "The Czechs are poorer than dogs and snakes, for even a dog would defend its abode. The Czechs should, according to the laws of God and according to the innate laws of nature, be the first in the offices of the Kingdom of Bohemia. Like the French are in France and the Germans in Germany, so should the Czechs themselves rule in their own land." Hus was the first to stabilize the literary Czech language, which at that time was almost identical with the Slovak dialect of to-day. He also

introduced the diacritical signs used in principle still to-day by Czechs and Croats (phonetic spelling of *š* for *sh*, *č* for *tch*, etc.).

Not less interesting in this connection is the influence of the Czech Reformation on Bohemia's sister nation Poland, which marked the commencement of deeper spiritual relationship between the two Slav countries. Just as at the beginning of her history, Bohemia was instrumental in accelerating the spread of Christianity in Poland, so now again the religious ferment in Bohemia was not without its effects on Poland. Žižka, the subsequently famous Hussite warrior, gained experience in Polish ranks, and assisted King Jagello in his war against the Teutonic knights who were finally defeated at the battle of Grunwald in 1410. The Polish king sent a message of victory to John Hus, whom he knew as the leader of the national Czech party, and Hus replied in a letter of congratulation, expressing a wish to visit Poland. Two years later Hus wrote to King Jagello again, this time on the necessity of Church reform, for the movement had meanwhile spread to Poland. Polish ambassadors in Constance did all they could to save Hus from shameful death. Subsequently the Hussites were on friendly terms with the Poles, many of whom fought in their ranks. Of great interest is the disputation of Cracow in 1431, which was held in the presence of the Polish king and his Senate between the Hussite delegates and the learned doctors of the Cracow University. King Vladislav was, it seems, favourably inclined towards the Hussites, although he hesitated to show it by deeds. He was even offered the Bohemian crown by the Hussites, but he referred the honour to Vitold, Duke of Lithuania, called the "requested king," who sent Sigismund Korybut as his representative. Korybut was for a time on very friendly terms with Žižka, whom he called his "father," but inclined later to the moderates, and was finally recalled from Bohemia. Not only Bohemia, but also Poland, inclined more and more towards Protestantism, and both countries profited therefrom spiritually, but finally Catholicism triumphed in both countries during the seventeenth century.

CHAPTER V

THE HUSSITE WARS

THE Hussite wars are rightly considered as one of the most glorious periods of Bohemian history. We will again refrain from giving unnecessary details of the wars which have appeared in English before or which do not quite fall in with the intent of this book.

Great times give birth to great men. Just as England of the seventeenth century had her Cromwell and revolutionary France one hundred and fifty years later her Napoleon, so Hussite Bohemia found a great leader in **John Žižka z Trocnova**. Although an old man and possessing only one eye, which he later lost, his heart and genius never failed him however stronger was his enemy. Against the heavy armoured crusades he used all sorts of devices which placed his armies in an advantage. He employed with great success heavy war-wagons (tanks), which he bound together to form a moving wall. Behind this wall moved on the Hussites, lightly clad, with shields and arms of their own, among which iron flails and long lances with hooks were conspicuous. The greatness of Žižka lies, however, not only in his strategic genius, no doubt the greatest of contemporary Europe, but also in his moral strength, his statesmanship, and his democratic spirit. Although he had none of the learning and rhetorical talent of his successor, Prokop the Great, his faith was deep and firm in its simplicity. He was a true leader of the "God's Warriors," among whom equality prevailed, and he never had any ambition to become a king or to conquer territories, though he easily could have done so, because the Hussites often invaded neighbouring countries. His only aim, however, remained the defence of the faith, and in this he succeeded by his stratagem and the use of new

weapons, as well as by the democratization of his armies, which included mostly peasants and even women. His patriotism stood beyond question, for the Hussite movement, as we have pointed out before, acquired from the outset a national character. The atrocities committed in the beginning by the Germans on the Hussites and the slaughter by Sigismund's army of every Czech, because every Czech as such was regarded a heretic, made soon the Hussite cause a national cause of the whole Czech nation, notwithstanding its paramount religious character. An early proclamation of Žižka to his countrymen reads as follows :—

DEAREST BRETHREN,

God grant through His grace that you return to your first charity, and that, doing good deeds, like true children of God, you abide in His fear. If He has chastised and punished you, I implore you not to be cast down by affliction. Consider those who work for the faith and suffer persecution from its adversaries, but particularly from the Germans, whose extreme wickedness you have yourselves experienced for the sake of Jesus Christ. . . . Follow the example of your ancestors, who were always ready to defend the cause of God and their own. For ourselves, my brethren, having always before our eyes the laws of God and the welfare of our country, we must be vigilant. And it is requisite that whoever is capable to wield a knife, to throw a stone or lift a cudgel, should be ready to march. Therefore, my brethren, I inform you that we are collecting troops from all parts in order to fight against the enemies of truth and against the destroyers of our nation. . . . Have courage and be prepared. May God grant you strength.

ŽIŽKA OF THE CHALICE,

in the hope of God, Chief of the Taborites.

In his religious views Žižka was a radical, though not an extremist. For this reason he is often put as a contrast to Hus and Peter Chelčický, the founder of the Bohemian Brethren and the precursor of Tolstoy. Žižka's radicalism certainly contrasts strangely with the Christian meekness and non-resistance of Chelčický, and it is characteristic of the inner conflict between the two extremes which harass the Slav soul. It is difficult to decide where the truth or greater merit lies, whether with the passive humanitarian Slav spirit, not devoid of deep moral strength, or with uncompromising radicalism, full of moral courage and lofty

idealism, but often lacking in common sense and bordering on Utopian extremism. Like other Slavs, the Czechs also suffer from this inner conflict, even though they learned a great deal of common sense from their German neighbours. From them they learned a great deal of realism without losing their souls, and their mission now, as in the past, as the forerunners of spiritual progress, will be attained by means of a reconciliation of these inner conflicts of Slav character, and of the conflict between Slav idealism and Western realism. That such reconciliation is ultimately possible, of that the best proof is the personality of President Masaryk, in whom the spirit of humanitarian Slav meekness, of lofty, yet practical idealism, and of reasonable radicalism are so well harmonized and so typically personified.

This conflict of character lay no doubt also at the bottom of the discrepancies which early arose between the Hussites themselves. On one side were the University and the moderates of Prague, on the other the radical peasants of Tábor, both condemned by the Church. The Masters of the Prague University openly declared the Communion under both kinds to be necessary for salvation, and proclaimed Hus "holy martyr for Christ's truth." The nobility, who also stood up in revolt against the Council of Constance, permitted, soon after the burning of John Hus, the free preaching of the Gospel, and recognized, besides the Gospel, the Prague University as the sole authority on theological questions. But more radical views prevailed among the people, who gathered on the mountains in the country, especially in the Tábor and Pilsen districts, where the views of Jakoubek, the author of the Chalice worship, on the abolition of ceremonies were quickly gaining ground. Only the Germans of Bohemia remained hostile to the movement, and supported the new Pope, Martin V, who threatened a crusade against Bohemia.

During the unrest which ensued, King Venceslas, who in his later days turned against Hussitism, died in 1419. Naturally the recognition of Sigismund as King of Bohemia was out of question, for it was he who betrayed Hus and delivered him to death. Hence war became inevitable.

The Hussites, radicals and moderates, agreed on a common

programme in October 1419, called the Four Articles of Prague, stipulating that (1) the Gospel shall freely be preached, (2) all mortal sins and other misdemeanours against the laws of God shall be prohibited and prosecuted, (3) Holy Communion under both kinds shall be taken by all, (4) priests shall abandon all possession of worldly goods and shall live up to the teachings of Christ. This was the common ground on which they always united in times of common danger. Of the great Hussite victories we may mention at least the battles of Prague in 1420, at Ustí in 1426, at Tachov in 1427 (against the Great Crusade lead by Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester), and at Domažlice in 1431, as the most conspicuous occasions on which the Hussite armies routed the armies of Sigismund, composed mostly of Germans and Hungarians, and whole crusades, well equipped with arms and superior in numbers. The Czechs have never suffered defeat from their enemies, and they remained invincible until Rome was forced to treat with them on the basis of the Prague articles.

All the glory of these victories did not, however, fall to Žižka alone, who died already in October 1424. His successor, Prokop the Great, proved in many respects even superior to Žižka, if not in military genius at least in intelligence. He was an accomplished scholar and excelled in wisdom, for his efforts were not directed towards the humiliation of his enemies but towards the restoration of peace to the whole country.

The formal questions on which the Hussites amongst themselves agreed concerned the question of transubstantiation, the question of the moral justification of war, and the question of vestments, sacraments, and ceremonies. The question of the moral justification of war concerned only the advisability of the priests inciting to war, since nobody questioned the right of waging war for the defence of the country or of the Faith. As regards the question of transubstantiation, all Hussites agreed in their denunciation of the so-called "Picardism," viz. the teaching which absolutely rejected transubstantiation, and which was always considered foreign in Bohemia, its name being probably derived from the French district of Picardy, whence

it was supposed to have originated. Nobody was, indeed, more severe and uncompromising in suppressing Picardism than Žižka himself. The radical Taborites, who in theological matters recognized the authority of the Bible alone, and rejected all ceremonies and idolatry, denied, like Wycliffe, only the actual, physical transformation of bread and wine into the Body and the Blood of Jesus Christ, asserting that their substance remained unchanged, but admitting Christ's sacramental, symbolic presence in the Eucharist. The moderates of Prague, on the other hand, insisted on the Catholic point of view, which was also held by Hus. The first view was expounded by Jakoubek; the second by Příbram, the leader of the moderates. The Hussite synod, a new authority besides the University, solved the question by formulating the teaching about transubstantiation as "the real presence of Christ's Body and Blood in the Eucharist," which satisfied both parties. It is interesting to note in this connection that Peter Chelčický, of whom we shall speak later, stood near to the Taborites, and yet suspected them of Picardism. This rebuke was unjust, for the Taborites were always most anxious that in this very difficult question there should be no doubt as to their attitude, and it was just their opposition to "Picardism" which united them with the moderates. One of their priests, John Němec, found a good formulation for their view as the faith in the "holy, spiritual, powerful, and true presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist."

We must not lose sight of the fact that the Hussite movement took place in the Middle Ages, and therefore must be judged according to mediæval standards. It often bordered, especially in its beginnings, on religious raving and chiliasm, natural in the conditions in which the Hussites found themselves. At a time when they had to submit to a great deal of persecution, some of the Hussites began to rave about the coming of Christ's Millennium, the day of Lord Jesus and of the Last Judgment. All enemies of Christ would perish, and all towns and villages would disappear except five (Pilsen, Žatec, Louny, Slaný, and Klatovy), and the mountains, the places of gatherings, the

chief of which was given the Biblical name Tábor. The selected faithful ones would no more require books to read, all Government would disappear, private property would be abolished, and complete equality among men would be established. This blind faith led to fanaticism: chiliasm gave birth to the undaunted and dreaded "God's Warriors." But all the Taborites were not affected by this raving, and chiliasm gave way, especially in times of common danger, to reason and common sense. A deep sense of moral responsibility remained, and religious enthusiasm transformed men totally. On the other hand, it is natural that the religious ravings should have produced also extremist movements bordering on insanity. Thus the Adamites ceased to dress themselves in memory of the first man and woman in paradise, and began to practise "feasts of love" during Communion in the frenzy of a mistaken interpretation of the Bible and of pantheism. They believed themselves to be children of God, and therefore unable to sin. Wishing, no doubt, to make an end to these excesses Žižka extirpated them mercilessly.

New strife between radicals and moderates ensued in 1423 on the question of Church pomp, especially as regards the priests' vestments. The Taborites simplified their masses so that the priests wore no special vestments, the altars consisted often of a simple table, and Mass was often held in the open air, the whole ceremony consisting of a simple prayer in Czech, whereupon the Holy Eucharist was administered. Similarly, baptism and other ceremonies were simplified, and holy pictures and statues were destroyed as serving idolatry. On the other hand, the moderates insisted on the preservation of old customs. After long negotiations an agreement was arrived at between the two parties, and mutual respect found expression in the immediate service of a Mass of each kind by a priest of the opposite party, Prokop the Great himself serving the Mass of the moderates.

The differences were thereby, of course, not quite removed, but they were never great where the principles of the sole authority of the Bible was concerned, and the Articles of Prague always remained the common programme. Both

parties were convinced that they still belonged to the Church, though in practice obviously they had long ceased to belong to it, especially the Taborites, who even elected their own bishop in 1420 (Mikuláš of Pelhřimov). The moderates, however, more and more inclined back towards Catholicism in their desire for official recognition, and the Taborites felt equally the need of some agreement with the Church. Prokop the Great did not, therefore, hesitate to go to Bratislava in 1429 to negotiate with Rome, though this time the negotiations had no result. To final negotiations it came only after the last overwhelming victories of 1432. At the preliminary discussions at Cheb (Eger) the Hussites gained a great moral victory by the assurance that they would be admitted as fully qualified members of the Basel Council, where an opportunity would be accorded them to defend freely their views. The subject of the negotiations would be the four Articles of Prague, later known as *Compactata*, the only criterion of authority to be the Gospel and the teachings of the Holy Fathers.

Thus came the Hussites to Basel in 1433. The Council made ample provisions about the behaviour of the public, and prohibited the public appearance of light women, lest the moral feelings of the "heretics" be offended. The Hussite delegation, which was joined also by a Polish Ambassador, was composed of three hundred persons. Among their chief speakers was Prokop himself, Jan Rokycana, Mikuláš z Pelhřimova, and the Englishman Peter Payne. All of them showed great rhetorical skill, and had ready answers to every argument of the Romanists, who included such prominent Catholics as Cardinal Cesarini, John of Ragusa, and John Polemar of Barcelona. Unfortunately the Czechs lost a great deal of their prestige owing to the fratricidal battle of Lipany in 1434, in which the Taborites were beaten and Prokop himself fell, "wearied by conquering rather than conquered himself" (Eneas Sylvius). Thereby also the firmer moderates, lead by Rokycana, were forced to yield. The saying of Polemar that the Czechs were "like a wild horse who must be handled gently before he gets his halter" came true. After long negotiations in Basel and Prague, an agreement was

at last concluded at Jihlava in 1436 which was far from satisfactory, as it allowed communion under both kinds only conditionally, and admitted only certain principles of the other articles. This was, according to Sigismund's promises, only a basis for further negotiations, yet it remained a moral defeat for Hussitism. This moral humiliation, no doubt dictated to a great extent also by the general desire of a small nation for peace, was unfortunately later intensified by a further decadence of the Hussite religious movement, which ended in the forcible suppression of the Taborites in 1452. The last exploit of the latter was an auxiliary expedition which, under the leadership of Čapek, went to aid the Poles against the Germans, and came as far as the Baltic.

The Hussite Reformation defeated its own object by a fatal failure to encompass the true import of its attempt, by its failure to see that to the Church the Czechs would remain heretics as long as they upheld any of their fundamental principles. This dilemma and the vain attempt to reconcile Hussitism with Catholicism lies also at the bottom of the subsequent decadence of the Utraquists, who more and more relinquished the Hussite tradition. The spirit of John Hus, however, in which the Taborites gloried, was not to die: it found a grand resurrection in the Unity of the Bohemian Brethren, the noblest blossom of the Czech Reformation.

Although the Hussite wars did not end in a complete vindication of the efforts of Hussitism, yet they are of great importance as the first significant effort made by a whole nation against the authority of the Church, and as the first attempt of its kind at the assertion of the modern principle of freedom of conscience and of democracy. For Bohemia itself the wars had a deplorable economic effect, but they promoted greatly the national cause. Almost all towns, especially Prague, now became exclusively Czech, and national self-respect was restored. The general standard of morality and education was raised, and every Hussite woman was said to have known the Bible better than a Romanist priest. But war-times are not favourable to literature, which during the period of the Hussite Wars

was restricted to satirical poems and religious songs and treatise. Of the Hussite songs the best known is *Ye Who Are God's Warriors*, sung by the Hussites when going to battle, which often put the enemy to flight ere he saw the approaching armies. Historical accounts of the battles of Ústí and Domažlice have been preserved, but of greatest interest is Žižka's Military Order, which gives not only a vivid picture of his strategic genius and military discipline, but also of the spiritual background and of the lofty aims, which united all his warriors by mutual trust and affection.

The use of the Czech language in Church raised its prestige, which was such that the Poles were proud to declare that theirs was similar. In Slovakia Hussite influence dominated, and Czech became the literary language of the Slovaks for four centuries, being at one time even used in the Hungarian Diet besides Latin.

The influence of the Hussites in Slovakia is of such importance that it deserves a special notice. Like in the nineteenth, so also in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Prague University became the intellectual centre of attraction both for the Czechs and Slovaks. Later on the Hussites, under John Jiskra z Brandýsa, occupied all Slovakia in their resistance to Vladislav as King of Hungary. They brought new faith to the Slovaks, their fortified Churches having been preserved to this day. The Slovaks could freely sing and pray in their own tongue, and their scanty efforts in literature received a sound impetus. The religious influence of the Hussite occupation, strengthened by Czech emigrants during the Thirty Years' War, left distinct traces in Slovakia to this day.

The first to invade Slovakia was Žižka himself in 1423. Four years later Prokop the Great came as far as the Danube in his expedition against the Hungarians. In June 1432 the Taborites occupied Trnava, which became the Hussite centre until 1435, when Sigismund bartered it back. In 1440 the Hussites in Slovakia began to participate, under Jiskra, in the feud between the infant king Ladislav, whose part they took, and the Polish king Vladislav, whose interests were defended by Hunyady. Jiskra held the whole of present Slovakia, the Slovaks having recognized Ladislav,

grandson of the great Bohemian king, Charles IV, as their king. Jiskra defended well this territory as "Count of Sarys" until Vladislav fell in a battle against the Turks at Varna in 1444. Hunyady then recognized Ladislav as King, but proclaimed himself Governor. Jiskra continued in his opposition against Hunyady, whom he repeatedly vanquished, especially at Lučenec in 1451. At last a truce was concluded: Jiskra remained supreme in almost the whole territory which he held, and received compensation for the rest. But the new king Ladislav repaid him badly for his services on accession, and compelled him to resign. Jiskra obeyed and dissolved his Army, though some of his captains, like Peter Aksamit, continued resistance on their own responsibility. Only later did the King recognize his mistake, and called Jiskra back to his Court in 1456. On Ladislav's death the following year Jiskra again took part in the struggles between rival candidates for the Hungarian throne, until the Bohemian king, George of Poděbrady, reconciled him with the new king of Hungary, Mathias, in 1462. Jiskra died in 1470.

John Jiskra was an interesting personality. He was of a very generous nature, and paid his armies well. He was not only a bold warrior, but also an able politician. Czech was exclusively used in his army and in all his correspondence and treaties. It was chiefly due to his influence that the Czech Bible acquired such influence in Slovakia. According to Kollar it was Jiskra who "multiplied and rejuvenated" the Slovaks, who then, for a time at any rate, had once more the good fortune of living freely in union with their Czech brethren.

CHAPTER VI

THE BOHEMIAN BRETHREN—KING GEORGE OF PODĚBRADY

POOOR, indeed, were the results of the Hussite wars. The compacts or "Compactata," as were called the articles recognized by the Basel Council, were never accepted by the Holy See, who later declared them invalid. They remained, nevertheless, the only ground to which the Bohemians adhered, and they were enacted as a law which was recognized even by the Bohemian Catholics, through the agreement of Kutná Hora of 1485 between the two parties. The chief characteristics of the Utraquists were an independent consistory whose members were not confirmed by the Pope, Communion under both kinds, the use of Czech in churches, and the veneration of John Hus. These differences were not great, and yet they were considered sufficient by Rome to look down upon Bohemians as upon heretics. The latter, however, lacked the courage and vital energy to secede from Rome, with sad consequences to the moral level of their religion. Meanwhile, the gulf between Rome and Bohemia became wider and wider.

The true heirs of Hus were not the lukewarm Utraquists, but the BOHEMIAN BRETHREN, a religious community whose story offers one of the most interesting chapters in the religious history of Europe, and whose influence has done a great service to Bohemia and the world.

The founder of the Bohemian Brethren was a simple, yet wise peasant **Peter Chelčický**, who often listened to the sermons of John Hus, and was deeply moved by his advocacy of an ideal Christian Church. Peter was among those who early during the Hussite wars opposed the use of arms, even in self-defence, which the Hussites admitted. Peter Chelčický knew of no compromise on this point. He

represents the other extreme of the Hussite Reformation and of the Slav soul: the meek Christian attitude that believes in conquest by humility. It was a strange irony of fate which preserved the meek Brethren, while the strong radical Taborites succumbed.

Chelčický, like Tolstoy, rejected all war on moral principles, since Christ conquered by love and meekness, and not by violence, bade Peter to sheath his sword and preached non-resistance to evil: "God gave us a commandment to love one another. This includes both our friends and enemies. Such a love cannot do evil either to friends or enemies, least of all can it permit us to kill them, for that is the worst evil of all. Against this commandment sins the Roman Church in many ways by inciting the people to bloodshed." Like Hus, he had only contempt for wicked priests, and of the Pope he said: "Our Lord Jesus went humbly on a donkey, but the Pope goes on a stalwart steed with golden bridles, coloured tassels on his hat, and adorned with pearl buttons. . . . A true antichrist, who with his pride blasphemes God." As a personality Chelčický was, in the words of Denis, "a strong, pure soul, a simple heart free from cunning, a simple man with no claims to scientific knowledge, but full of sincere hatred of the world." In his two great works, *The Postilla* and *The Net of True Faith*, Chelčický's views of the world are clearly stated: "Let us read the Holy Bible with a simple heart, and let us commend ourselves into the hands of Him Who died for us. . . . There is no salvation for a Christian except he liberate himself from the temptations of the world. No agreement between the world and Jesus is possible. The world, and all that is worldly, is unchristian. He who obeys laws and fears punishment is not a Christian. Only he who of his own free will strives after virtue is a Christian. Because the State and the Church are based on law, they are the opposite of virtue. The State cannot be suppressed, it is a necessary evil, and as such has a negative justification. As to the Church, its decay began when under Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, the State became Christian. In truth the Church surrendered to the world." But Chelčický had no intention of becoming the judge of society

or of preaching revolution: "Nobody has the right to judge, except God. The true Christian lives apart from the State, but must not oppose it, for he must 'render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's.' All attempt at revolt is a crime. All war, even the most justified, is godless and wicked. All resort to violence is sin. A Christian does not wage war, does not betray the truth, does not require law courts." Among other postulates of Chelčický is voluntary personal poverty, opposition to death sentence and any oath, opposition against all class distinction and against commerce, the ideal occupation for a Christian being, according to him, agriculture. [Like Rousseau and Tolstoy, Chelčický invites people to leave the towns which are the work of Cain, and to return to Nature.] Christian simplicity does not require great learning, to which the Brethren were also at the beginning opposed. But many of these strict principles which bordered on ascetism were later of necessity modified, and the Bohemian Brethren became the embodiment of the best that the Czech Reformation produced as pioneers of humanity, tolerance, and education.

The man who really was responsible for the origin of this community, even though unconsciously, was **John Rokycana**, a wise, sincere, and moderate Hussite priest, who through his eloquence saved Prague from destruction at the hands of Žižka in 1424, and who also took a prominent part at Basel. Later he was selected for the first Utraquist Archbishop, though the Pope refused to recognize him in this capacity. He was one of the few Hussites who even after the Hussite wars remained true to the old tradition of moral regeneration, and never ceased to preach against moral indifference and vice. He was no theologian, but rather an apostle in the spirit of John Hus, laying greatest stress on a living faith and moral life. To his eager pupils, amongst whom was also Gregory, the actual founder of the Unity of Bohemian Brethren, he gave Chelčický's writings, and advised them to go and listen to him. Too late did he perceive that thus he gave rise to a new Church which would secede even from the Utraquists as well as from Rome, and turn against both.

Gregory, formerly a monk in the Slav Monastery of Emauzy, became the St. Paul of the new Church. As a shrewd observer of the sad religious conditions, he began to wake up the people and stir them through his own exemplary life. King George of Poděbrady gave the Unity, at Rokycana's request, an estate in East Bohemia on which the Brethren lived in evangelical poverty. No stress was at first laid on the dogmatic side of the movement, and the differences which finally caused their cessation consisted in an utmost simplification of ceremonies, and in the election of their own priests and later bishops. The simplification of ceremonies lead to the first persecutions of the Brethren by King George of Poděbrady. As Denis says: "The pupils of Chelčický became the successors of the Taborites just because they differed so much from them. Such is the ultimate and inevitable result of revolutions: after heroes come the martyrs." But these persecutions became even greater when the Brethren selected their own priests, and even Rokycana himself turned against them (1468). Only the sudden death of both King George and Rokycana in 1471 saved them.

The new king, Vladislav Jagello, had neither the time nor the desire to oppress heretics. During the next few decades the Brethren gained many adherents even among the nobles, and at the beginning of the sixteenth century they had some 200,000 members in Bohemia and Moravia. Their numbers increased especially when Brother Lucas, himself the author of about eighty publications, finally formulated the creed of the new Church and revised its strict rules, thereby assuring it independence and popularity in the future, for the lack of clear theological creed and its asceticism were hitherto the chief sources of its weakness and unpopularity. The Brethren were henceforward allowed to occupy public posts and to wage war, if compelled to do so. Priests were allowed to marry and nobles were not excluded from the Unity. Education and knowledge were not only no more feared, but became the first task and virtue of the Brethren. The new Church grew rapidly. It lost none of its noble qualities through its popularity. The Brethren remained earnest, gentle, and

modest. Last, not least, they displayed a remarkable religious tolerance in an age which seethed with religious hatred and fanaticism, for they never condemned people of other faith, recognizing that "good people may exist in every Church."

It is evident that the permanent gulf between the Bohemians and the Pope, who then was still the Great Power, was a considerable menace to the stability of the Bohemian State. It was, therefore, most fortunate that Bohemia found a ruler of such high gifts of statesmanship as **George of Poděbrady**. It is true that the Church recognized the compacts in 1436, but at the same time it sought the first opportunity to repeal them, while for the Utraquists they formed a minimum programme, embodied in the Bohemian law. Their first step, on the initiative of Rokycana and Hynek Ptáček, King George's tutor, was to unite the various sections of the remaining Hussites, which was finally achieved in 1448. The Utraquists had to reckon not only with foreign opposition, but also with internal enemies, the Catholic lords, led by Ulrich of Rosenberg, who, though not numerous, were powerful. The short reign of Albert Habsburg (1437-1439) and the intrigues under Ladislav Posthumus (1439-1457) were filled with constant struggles between the two rival parties. It was then that George Poděbrad found his first opportunity, on the death of Ptáček (1444) as the leader of the Utraquists, to check the intrigues of the Catholic party. The General Diet, or Parliament, of all the lands of the Bohemian Crown, which met in Prague in 1446, voiced the feelings of the people when it raised complaints against the detention of the young king Ladislav in Vienna, and demanded the recognition of the compacts and of Rokycana as Utraquist Archbishop. The Pope then sent Cardinal Carvajal as Legate to Bohemia to inquire into the conditions there, but his mission embittered the Czechs only more, since he openly disapproved of the Communion under both kinds. Profiting by the international situation, George at last put an end to the growing anarchy, assembled an army of 9,000 men, and occupied Prague (1448). His further action in securing Bohemia for the Utraquists was crowned with

equal success, and the Diet appointed him Regent in 1452. The Catholic lords were soon compelled to recognize him. The coronation of Ladislav in the following year only strengthened George's position through the presence of the king's authority.

Meanwhile, the religious question remained as difficult as ever. There was no intention on the part of the Utraquists to secede, and the negotiations with the Eastern Church failed. Rome still hoped for the abolition of the compacts. In 1457 the young king suddenly died. According to the old Constitution, succession appertained to the relatives of Ladislav, in the first place to Emperor Frederick as the head of the Habsburgs. But in practice election by the Diet was decisive, as in any case the king had to be "accepted" by the Estates. Thus on March 2, 1458, George of Poděbrady already respected and feared as an able diplomat, soldier, and politician, became unanimously elected King of Bohemia.

He was the only true Czech Hussite king, and therefore occupies an exceptional place in Bohemian history. For his foreign policy, however, and for his efforts at securing an international peace by means of a league of Christian princes and of an international parliament, he deserves an honourable place in the history of the whole world.

His position as a Hussite king among the other sovereigns was difficult enough to tax his diplomatic capabilities. Added to this was the latent divergence with Rome which threatened to break out at any moment, and which it was George's foremost task, if not to alleviate, at least to postpone. Above all, peace and consolidation were necessary for Bohemia to recuperate after her long wars. Rome found in him a moderate, yet a firm and dangerous enemy. He promised obedience and undertook to extirpate all heresy, which explains his persecutions of the Taborites and later of the Brethren, the only blot on his glorious career. At the same time, by his coronation oath he promised to keep the laws of Bohemia, which comprised also the compacts once recognized by the Basel Church Council. A great credit to his diplomatic skill was the quick recognition which he obtained in all his Crown lands, and which enabled him

rapidly to consolidate the Bohemian State. He further induced the Habsburgs to renounce their claims to the throne, became friendly even with the German Emperor, knowing well how to profit from dissensions among German princes. Such became his reputation for statesmanship that later there was even a question of George himself becoming Roman Emperor, although his Hussite views were known and although he could not speak German. But George contented himself with concluding firm friendship with his neighbours in Germany, Poland, and Hungary. This, and his initiative in organizing a European defence against the Turks, were a direct challenge to the Pope. It was a carefully-thought-out preparation for the new struggle between Rome and Bohemia, which to King George appeared inevitable.

The idea of bringing about "a general understanding of all Christian kings and princes to secure a lasting peace between them which would also preserve the restricted powers of the Pope and the Emperor, and protect Christianity against the Turks," was the great plan of George of Poděbrady, conceived on the advice of such men as Martin Mair, Antonio Marini of Grenoble, and Gregory Heimburg. The rulers of Europe were to form a common parliament, and the powers of the Pope were to be restricted to spiritual matters. With this project Marini went as King George's Ambassador to Rome in 1461, for King George then still reckoned with the Pope's help, and only later conceived a new plan without the Pope. The King of Poland was persuaded in favour of the plan in Hlohov in 1462, and a defensive alliance was concluded, which also provided that all quarrels between Poland and Bohemia should be settled by arbitration. Also Hungary, Venice, and Bavaria were favourably inclined to the project, and above all France, for King Louis XI was by no means a friend of the Pope. The plan would have been realized in 1464 had it not been for the intrigues of Rome, especially in France, where the Pope's party was again in the majority.

The project of George of Poděbrady is the more interesting as it not only was the first of its kind in Europe but as it resembles in many details the Constitution of the League

of Nations. Thus, for instance, no member of King George's league was to wage war, the decision in all disputes being reserved to the league. The league was to protect its members against all attacks of nations who were not members, and it was even to exert influence to prevent war among non-members. The league was, further, to administer an International Court of Justice, and its chief organ was to be an assembly which would sit in Basel. Every nation would have had one vote, irrespective of its political divisions, so that all princes of the same nationality (French, German, Italian, or Spanish) would have had to come to an agreement before casting their one vote in the assembly. It would have had also legislative power on the basis of natural right.

While George Poděbrad was taking practical steps to realize his project, Pius II (Aeneas Sylvius) openly defied him by rejecting the compacts in 1462, to which King George replied by proclaiming his readiness to lay down his own and his family's lives for the Cup. The Cup was the symbol of the Czech revolution against the secular power of the Church. The dogmatic importance of the Communion under both kinds was, indeed, only secondary. But it involved questions of far greater scope: the sovereignty of the State and its independence from Papal interference, the suppression of Church property, moral reformation, and freedom in spiritual matters. Rome resented, above all, the curtailing of its political power. Since, however, King George soon after liberated the Emperor from the Turkish siege of Vienna, the Pope postponed the case against him. Nor did his successor, Paul II, dare to risk a fight with King George. The latter considered carefully his strength, for he had to reckon also with the political opposition of the Bohemian Catholic lords, who grudged him his strong position as king. Among the masses he was as popular as ever, and a statue of him was erected on the Tyn Church with the inscription "God's truth conquers." Yet King George continued negotiations with his Catholic minorities, and never allowed them to be oppressed. In 1466 the Pope proclaimed King George a heretic, deposing him from the throne, and declaring the

oath of allegiance of his subjects to him as invalid. Yet neither Germany nor Poland would obey the Pope and fight the Bohemian king, but when both Austria and Hungary (King Matthew) and his own Catholic lords turned against him, the odds seemed to turn at last against Bohemia, who lost some of her territories. In order to save his country, he renounced the right of his sons to succession, and began to negotiate with the Polish king Casimir, whose son Vladislav ultimately actually succeeded George to the Bohemian throne. The wars continued, and George's fortune returned when his son successfully invaded Hungary and the Emperor Frederick renewed friendship with him. The Hussite king was on the brink of his triumph, when he suddenly died in 1471, a month after Rokycana's death.

His successors lacked his ability and wisdom, and so the Bohemian State, instead of following the path of progress and peace, and instead of growing in the strength secured for it by King George, became absorbed in continued religious discords, which were only aggravated by the growing social inequality, the power of the nobility on the one hand, and the slavery of the peasant, reduced to bondage by the Serfdom Act of 1487, on the other. Thus was betrayed Hussite democracy.

After the reign of King George of Poděbrady the Bohemian throne was held by the Polish Jagello dynasty. **Vladislav II** (1471-1516) was on the whole a weak ruler. He continued the struggle against King Matthew, to whom he lost Moravia, Silesia, and Lusatia, but on the latter's death Vladislav II not only received these territories back, but himself became King of Hungary. Vladislav's sympathies were with Rome, but the position of the Utraquists, who, after all, formed the majority of his people, was too strong for him to ignore. It was during his reign that the Catholics came to an agreement with the Utraquists (1485) and that the Unity of Bohemian Brethren, reorganized by Brother Lucas, acquired more and more influence. Already in the first decade of the sixteenth century the Brethren printed sixty, the others only ten books, thereby proving clearly their intellectual superiority. The influence of the humanistic school also is clearly apparent in the Czech literature of this

period. The Catholics and the Utraquists became seriously alarmed at the growth of the new community of the Bohemian Brethren, and through their pressure the king issued the famous St. Jacob Decree (1508), which ordered new severe persecutions of the Brethren and threatened to wipe them out. Not until the King's death in 1516 did these persecutions subside.

But perhaps the most unfortunate result of Vladislav's rule was, besides the introduction of bondage, the growth of the power of the nobility at the expense both of the Crown and of the towns, whose privileges for a time were entirely ignored.

His death was followed by a period of anarchy, during which the tyranny of the nobility reigned supreme, with feudal quarrels usual in those times. The young King Louis had hardly begun to exercise his royal functions when he fell at the battle of Mohacz against the Turks in 1526.

It was in that fatal year 1526 that the Habsburg dynasty was elected to the throne of Bohemia. It was that date which marked the last chapter of the freedom of the Czech nation.

CHAPTER VII

THE CULMINATION AND THE END OF THE CZECH REFORMATION

IN 1526 the Czechs elected of their free will the Habsburgs to their throne in the person of Ferdinand I, brother of the German Emperor Charles V, and thus was created, through the personal union between Bohemia, Austria, and Hungary, the kernel of the subsequent Dual Monarchy. It was a free federation necessitated chiefly by the growing Turkish menace, and assured the complete independence of its members. But although Bohemia was the most important member of this union, the possession of Hungary being until the end of the seventeenth century restricted to Slovakia and Western Hungary, the Habsburgs, as Catholics and Germans, remained ever foreigners in Bohemia. Their continuous misrule of the Czechs down to the end of the Great War, in the provocation of which they played the leading part, has well earned them the curse of every Czech and of the world. Instead of developing, as Bohemia under other rulers might have done, as the head of a new and great Empire in which freedom and equality of religion and race would have prevailed as in Switzerland, Bohemia under the Habsburgs became a vassal of the Habsburg Empire, exploited in favour of inferior Austria. For after 1620 the Habsburgs developed their Empire into the seat of reaction and racial oppression, which until recently remained the constant danger to peace in Europe.

The Bohemian Constitution, as it developed after the Hussite wars, and to which the newly elected King Ferdinand had sworn allegiance, conferred the government on the king and the Estates. Bohemia was independent of the Holy Roman Empire even though Ferdinand and his

successors were themselves emperors. The only connection with Germany remained the right of the Bohemian king to cast a vote in the election of the German Emperor, and to act as his cup-bearer.

The king's power in Bohemia was greatly restricted, the king being responsible in almost all things to Parliament (Estates). The Parliament elected, at least formally, the new king, and concluded a contract with him, but the relation between the power of the Crown and of the Estates varied according to the personality of the ruler. With such strong rulers as King George or Ferdinand I the power of the Crown was almost absolute, while at other times the Estates exercised an almost Oligarchic Government. But in Bohemia royal absolutism, such as prevailed in the German States, was unknown. The territories were not a personal property of the king or of the Estates. Both of them were only the administrators of the abstract Bohemian State. Until a king was elected, and accepted the conditions of the Estates, the government rested in the hands of the latter. Excepting the case of George of Poděbrady, the candidate was usually selected from the relatives of the last king. The king could never decide without the Estates, except, since Ferdinand I, in foreign affairs. The seat of the Bohemian king was Prague, although the Habsburgs—Rudolph II excepted—preferred to reside in Vienna.

The Estates (Parliament) were organized in each land (Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Lusatia) differently, but usually were divided into three categories (*curiæ*): lords, knights, and townsmen. The king could confer titles, but only such lord or knight who was accepted by the Estates could become their member. The hierarchy was no longer represented. The Parliament took the initiative in legislation, and sometimes (during the Jagellons) not even the sanction of the king was required to enact a law. Besides the local diets or parliaments, a General Parliament, to which all the lands sent delegates, was held periodically, usually in Prague.

Such was the constitution of the kingdom of Bohemia, the so-called "State Right," which remained valid even after the Czech revolt of 1618, and which modern Bohemia

often invoked in her struggle against Viennese centralism, to prove that legally Bohemia never ceased to be an independent State, and never became the personal property of the Habsburgs. Only the balance of government within the State was reversed in favour of the king, otherwise its independence remained unimpaired. The White Mountain spelt disaster to the freedom of the Czech people, not of the Bohemian State.

The chief reason of the growing crisis which ended in the tragedy of the White Mountain, was the religious question. **Ferdinand I** (1526–1574) did a great deal to strengthen the position of the Crown, yet despite all his efforts to promote the cause of Catholicism, the Bohemian Brethren gained always in strength, and the Protestant movement acquired fresh impetus from the Lutheran reformation in Germany. Many Utraquists, who were no more satisfied with the compacts, embraced Lutheranism, and even Ferdinand's son, Maximilian, was favourably inclined towards it. In vain did Ferdinand obtain the Pope's recognition for communion under both kinds, Protestantism was advancing even more rapidly during the reigns of **Maximilian** (1564–1576) and **Rudolf II** (1576–1612), a great patron of science and arts. This was the golden time of Czech literature, and the acme of Czech Reformation was achieved through the Letter of Majesty of 1609, assuring at last the Protestants and the Bohemian Brethren religious liberty. Events then followed rapidly under the rather moderate **Matthew** (1617–1619) towards the fall of Bohemian reformation and liberty.

Most remarkable was the growth of the Unity of the Bohemian Brethren, which was threatened not only by constant persecutions on the part of the Habsburgs, but also by the rival influence of Protestantism by which it was not engulfed thanks to the timely formulation of creed by Brother Lucas. And although the Unity probably never numbered more than one-tenth of the population, it represented nevertheless the best spiritual force of the country, and well earns therefore the title of the typically national Church of Bohemia. More than one-third of the whole Czech literature of the sixteenth century was produced by

the Bohemian Brethren. Between 1457 and 1620 the Unity gave Bohemia one hundred and fifty of its best writers, who produced some five hundred works, so far as we may judge by the volumes which have been preserved. As against one Catholic and one Utraquist printing press, they possessed three, and their books were also published abroad.

The dogmatic differences between the Brethren and the Lutherans were not too great. Unlike the latter, the Unity acknowledged the rites of the Seven Sacraments, and the Second Baptism. The theological basis of the Brethren was not even now too deep, and this explains also its frequent dependence on other sects, but on the whole the humanitarian spirit of the Unity, especially its toleration of other creeds, its meekness, and nobility of purpose, kept them apart as an independent Church.

The Unity found one of its strongest leaders in its new bishop, John Augusta, a man of dangerously obstinate and rash courage, and an independent personality. His bold efforts at official recognition were little in harmony with the meekness of Chelčický. But his petition to the king, signed by twelve lords and thirty-three knights, was sharply rejected by Ferdinand in 1535. The Utraquists, whose conservative moderation and decayed morality brought them into the same camp as the Catholics, were equally opposed to them. The lords among the Bohemian Brethren finally courted disaster by agitating against Ferdinand while he participated in the religious wars in Germany (1546-1547). The victorious Ferdinand took revenge in confiscating their property and renewing Vladislav's decree of 1508. Augusta was put in prison, exposed to unspeakable tortures to betray the names of other leaders of the Unity, and held in prison for sixteen years.

In consequence of these persecutions many Brethren left the country and emigrated to Poland, where they were gladly received. Later they settled in Prussia, where they remained until 1574.

Passing reference must be made to Poland, which, especially since 1552, had the reputation of the country of the greatest religious freedom in Europe. Protestantism quickly gained ground there, while Polish rulers, such as Sigismund August,

were, if not favourably inclined, at least enlightened enough to be tolerant towards it. Some of the greatest Polish noble families, such as the Zamojskis, Potockis, Leszczynskis, Sapiehas, Lubomirskis, and others, became converted. Prince Radziwil became Protestant through intercourse with Bohemian Protestants in Prague in 1533. As in Bohemia, the greatest work of Protestantism in Poland was a complete and original translation of the Bible into the vernacular. It deserves equal merit for the development of Polish literature in general during the sixteenth century. Protestants in Poland were divided into Lutherans, Calvinists, and the Bohemian Brethren. The latter two creeds were so similar that they concluded a union in 1555. The Lutherans proclaimed the dogma of consubstantiation, which was almost identical with transubstantiation, while the others rejected transubstantiation altogether. The acme of Protestantism in Poland was reached in 1570 through the agreement of Sandomir, and the cause of Catholicism was saved only through the untiring zeal of Cardinal Hosius and of the Jesuits. Also among the Slovenes of Kraina and Carinthia, Protestantism gained considerably and gave rise, through Truber and Dalmatin, to the formation of the local South Slav dialect as a literary language. The growth of Slovene Literature was suppressed by forcible Jesuit reaction at the end of the sixteenth century.

Persecutions of the Brethren in Bohemia did not affect Moravia, where their position was much stronger. Thus in the middle of the sixteenth century there were three distinct branches of the Unity: in Bohemia, in Moravia, and in Poland.

The greatest writer amongst the Bohemian Brethren was **John Blahoslav** (1523-1571), a man of great learning and broad outlook, gentle and wise, with many friends in foreign lands, among them Luther and Melanchthon. His personal influence gained the Unity even the favour of Maximilian, and his efforts for better education made the Czech schools famous throughout Europe. He stood in opposition to Augusta who, on being released after the death of Ferdinand, tried to unite the Brethren with the Lutherans. Blahoslav

defended the independence of the Unity and, like Lucas, insisted especially on education, since knowledge and science were to him the best support of true faith, as against Augusta and others, who condemned great learning as detrimental. Augusta's efforts to unite the Brethren with Lutherans and other Protestants would have almost broken up the unity of the Bohemian Brethren had he not died in 1572. As Denis says, he was "more a Protestant than a Brother, more a diplomat than a Bishop, and he would not have hesitated to deny the traditions of the Unity to secure the future of Czech Reformation, even though it meant the suicide of the Unity." Among Blahoslav's works is his book on the "Origin of the Unitas Fratrum and its Ordonnance," further a valuable collection of 735 hymns (*Cantional*), an excellent new translation from Greek of the New Testament into Czech and a Czech Grammar, the first of its kind, based chiefly on the works of Hus and on popular speech. His translation of the New Testament was completed by an original translation of the Old Testament, executed by eight eminent Brethren, and published by Lord Žerotín at the Unity's press in Kralice in Moravia. This Bible which became famous as the *Kralice Bible* has remained the treasure of many of those Protestants compelled to emigrate after the White Mountain catastrophe. It is an example of the most perfect Czech language of the times, and as such had also great importance in modern Czech philology.

The death of Blahoslav in 1571 deprived the Brethren of their last great Bishop prior to the White Mountain tragedy. The efforts of Bohemian Protestants were henceforward directed at a mutual understanding, without which they saw that even the otherwise tolerant Maximilian would not recognize them. The Calvinists and the Brethren found few obstacles to an understanding, but the Lutherans' creed and the spirit of their faith was not so apt to conciliation. Nevertheless, the mutual distrust was overcome, and an agreement between the Lutherans and the Brethren was at last reached in 1575 through a common creed known as the *Bohemian Confession*. This Confession was based chiefly on the Lutheran creed, adapted in some respects

to the faith of the Brethren and the old Hussite Utraquists. It was a bold attempt at the foundation of a national Czech Church, which would have necessitated also the placing under its control of the Utraquist Consistory. Maximilian tolerated the Bohemian Confession, but refused to recognize it explicitly, the more so as the Utraquist Consistory also opposed it. Nevertheless, the Lutherans (Lutheran Utraquists) and the Brethren enjoyed more freedom henceforward until the rise of the Roman-Spanish party at the Court of the mentally weak Rudolf II, known for his ultra-Catholic leanings, his inclination towards astrology, and his love of luxury. A very severe mandate against the Brethren was issued in 1602, aimed at the whole Bohemian Confession, which then comprised the overwhelming majority of the population, while the old (Catholic) Utraquists, whom since 1593 nothing divided from the Roman Catholics, though they still had a Consistory of their own, were in distinct minority. It is estimated that the number of Catholics in Bohemia which, during the sixteenth century, was still about one-third of the population, now formed less than a tenth. Among the nobility, one-quarter was Catholic, among the knights one-fourteenth. Not until Rudolf II was hard pressed, however, by the revolt of his Austrian, Moravian, and Hungarian Estates, led by his brother Matthew, could he be compelled by the Bohemian Protestants to yield and to sign the famous Letter of Majesty of 1609 (*Majestát*). At the same time an agreement was signed by the two parties regulating their mutual relations and assuring all rights to the Catholic minority. The Letter of Majesty recognized the Bohemian Confession and provided that every inhabitant, whether of noble birth or otherwise, could freely profess any religion, and that all denominations had the right to build their own churches on royal estates. The only question left open, and which became subsequently fatal, was whether the Estates of the Catholic Church were to be considered private property or Estates of the Crown, but this concerned hardly 4 per cent. of the population. In Moravia religious freedom had been assured even a year earlier by a law allowing every inhabitant to believe and profess any religion

"that God may reveal to him." The explanation why the Habsburgs ever allowed the Protestants, especially the Bohemian Brethren, greater freedom in Moravia than in Bohemia is that in Bohemia they were considered politically dangerous. At any rate, after 1609 Bohemia became, besides Poland, the seat of religious freedom in Europe, since even in the Protestant German States there was little religious liberty, and the religion of the subjects had to be in accord with that of the ruler (*cuius regio eius religio*). The Protestant Estates obtained also the control of the old Utraquist consistory and of the University. The Letter of Majesty, though issued in the king's name, was the work of the chief leader and spokesman of the Protestant Estates in their struggle for the freedom of conscience, the Bohemian Brother Venceslas Budovec z Budova. It was the last triumph of freedom in Bohemia, and, like the constitution of May 3rd in Poland, signalled the coming fall.

The question of the causes of the downfall, of the responsibility of the Bohemian Protestants for it, and of the possibility of its avoidance, is not an easy one. Some older Bohemian historians, such as Rezek and Tomek, and with them Ernest Denis, author of the *Fin de l'Indépendance Tchèque*, passed a severe censure on the Protestant leaders of the revolt, and saw in the fall the necessary consequence of their lack of moral character, egoistic class interests and carelessness. Modern historians, notably Professor Pekař in his work on the White Mountain, return to the earlier views of Palacký and Gindely, who did not blame the leaders alone for the downfall, and certainly did not doubt their moral, religious purpose, even if they admitted that their abilities and interests were not quite without reproach. Looking at the question from a broad point of view, it may at once be said that the conflict originated in the deep difference between the majority of the Bohemians and the dynasty, who identified its interests with the Church. At the same time Bohemia became unconsciously the victim of the latent conflict between the Roman and the Germanic world which broke out during the Thirty Years' War. The Bohemian Brethren, the real spiritual leaders and the hope of the Czech Reformation, remained, through the very

character of their creed, only passive onlookers of the struggle: "Tears are the safest weapons of my Church," lamented Komenský. No doubt the moral right and the cause of freedom were not on the side of Bohemia's enemies, even if they possessed force and if circumstances were favourable to them.

The direct provocation of the struggle was not of a grave character. The Catholic Church authorities closed the Protestant Churches in the two little German-Bohemian frontier towns of Hroby and Broumov. The Protestant Estates convoked a conference for May 21, 1618, to discuss the matter. This they were allowed to do by the Letter of Majesty, but Emperor Matthew forbade the conference, and declared the closing of the Protestant Churches was done with his consent, and was not opposed to the Letter of Majesty. Thus the glove was first thrown by the Habsburgs. There was still a possibility of avoiding the conflict by complying with the provisions of the Letter of Majesty which reserved decisions in disputes arising from the interpretation of its clauses to a special Tribunal, composed partly of Catholics, partly of Protestants. But the Protestant lords were enraged by the Emperor's veto, and the conference was held. Their wrath was not so directed against the Emperor himself as against two of his ministers and counsellors, Slavata and Martinic, who already in 1609 refused to sign the Letter of Majesty, and who were now believed to be the real authors of the Emperor's prohibition. At the conference, held at the Prague castle, the two ministers were charged with the contravention of the Letter of Majesty, and with being traitors to the Kingdom of Bohemia, found guilty, and thrown out of the windows. The chief of the king's Government, Zdeněk Lobkovic, leader of the fanatic Catholics, escaped a similar fate by being absent abroad. The two ministers were not killed by the fall, having fallen on some straw below, nevertheless the incident created great commotion in Bohemia and consternation in Vienna. Count Henry Thurn, leader of the Protestants, appointed immediately a government of thirty directors and proclaimed mobilization. Simultaneously he sent an apology to the Emperor, assuring

him of his loyalty, and explaining the whole incident as being directed solely against "the unfaithful sons of the fatherland." Obviously, there was no question of a revolt yet, except perhaps in the minds of some of the leaders. Thurn knew Ferdinand well, and no doubt foresaw what future danger he meant, since he tried to prevent his election as successor to Matthew in 1617, while Joachym Šlik openly advocated free election to the throne of Bohemia. Nevertheless, the appointment of a directorate and mobilization cannot be considered signs of a revolt or of a premature, ill-considered revolution, since the same means had been resorted to with success in 1609 and 1611 to force the hands of the Emperor. In this particular case, as we have pointed out, the Estates acted in self-defence against an outrage on the religious liberty of the country, and their step therefore may seem justified. The persons whom they so arbitrarily punished were justly considered dangerous, as learned politicians of a will bordering on fanaticism. Even Wallenstein called Slavata and Martinic brutes, and declared that "the foolish Czechs should not have thrown them out of the windows, but should have stabbed them through on the spot. A dead dog does not bite, and had it not been for them all might have been different."

Up to the death of Matthew there was no revolt in Bohemia against the dynasty. Only on his death did the directors declare they would not recognize Ferdinand II as successor, and Count Šlik declared to his Saxon friends: "We want now to deliver ourselves and our children from Austrian slavery." Once again the Czech nation stood up in defence of religious freedom. And yet how altered were the conditions of the times since the days of the Hussite wars. No more was there a popular movement of the masses. The peasants were, like in all other countries at that time except Sweden and Switzerland, enslaved, and "the nation" meant only the nobility and the townsmen, altogether in Bohemia only some 20,000 people, i.e. 1 per cent. of the population. And the revolution itself was decided upon only by a group of lords in the Estates. Herein lay one of the grievous faults which caused the failure of the revolt. Other reasons of the breakdown of

the revolution, which otherwise would not have been without a chance of success, were the bad management of the struggle and poor preparation, especially as regards foreign support. Even Moravia, owing to Žerotín's influence, for a long time hesitated before joining Bohemia, and hopes of the support of some of the German States and of England failed altogether. Strangely enough the only prince who sent the Bohemians support was the Catholic Duke of Savoy, Charles Emanuel.

Two more differences between this struggle and the Hussite wars strike us at first glance: the moral atmosphere of the times and their national character. In the words of the contemporary Pečka (1619) "the Czechs lacked the strength, courage, wisdom, and stratagem of their Hussite ancestors whom they wished to imitate. Everything seems false. When it comes to deeds, one meets only indecision. He who strives for liberty, needs money, iron, and pluck. The Czech revolt seems as ridiculous as a cow wishing to attack a tiger." These words may be exaggerated, but there is no doubt about the materialism of the times, contrasting strangely with the lofty enthusiasm of the Hussites. Last, not least, the revolt of 1618 is no more a purely Czech national movement like the Hussite wars. The German inhabitants took equal share in it—in fact, some of the principal leaders, even though they knew Czech well and remained good Bohemian patriots, and though of Czech origin, had become German (Šlik, Thurn, Colona, Fels, Kaplíř, Vilém Lobkovic). This speaks well for the racial tolerance of the times between the two nationalities of Bohemia, a mutual tolerance such as even to-day remains merely a cherished aim. On the other hand, the peaceful penetration of German influence under the cloak of Protestantism spelt serious danger to the Czech nationality, which was fortunately realized by such Czech-Protestant patriots as Stránský, and against which was also directed the law of 1615, providing that no foreigner could achieve civic rights in Bohemia without learning the Czech language. At a closer examination of the facts, we find that both the moral and social decay and the process of Germanization were only

temporary, and could have been rectified without hampering the progress of Bohemia, had it not been for the White Mountain catastrophe; but the latter cannot be directly attributed to either of the two facts.

A few more words must be said in this connection in regard to the peaceful German penetration in Bohemia at the end of the sixteenth century, due, in the first place, to the spreading of Lutheranism. Religious brotherhood promoted also national friendship between Czechs and Germans. Added to this was the immigration of German Protestants from those countries where anti-Reformation was rampant. Thus, for instance, many districts in North Bohemia were then colonized (Teplice, Ustí, Most). Certain German nobles bought property in Bohemia, and even some members of the native Czech noble families became Germanized either through Lutheranism or because their landed property was inhabited by Germans. We may mention only the families Lobkovic, Kolovrat, and Valdštejn. The contemporary Czech author, Stránský, became justly alarmed, and protested against the Germanizing tendencies of the nobility by quoting Dalimil's prophetic words, which became literally fulfilled, that when the German nation would begin to thrive in Bohemia, the Bohemian lands would be betrayed, and the Bohemian crown taken to Germany.

German penetration came not only from the north, but also from the south. The Catholic Czechs displayed no great patriotism, and, like the Protestants, they looked for foreign support chiefly in Spain and Italy. The Habsburgs, equally Catholic as German, contributed their share by appointing German officials in many important public posts in Bohemia. The growth of the Catholic Party among the nobility, and their religious fanaticism, must be, however, attributed chiefly to the education of the Jesuits, whose "councils" had been introduced by the Emperor in high offices since 1600. It is thus clear that both Germanization and anti-Reformation had taken root in Bohemia even before the White Mountain, but it remains more than doubtful whether the anti-Reformation would have triumphed through mere peaceful penetration, as it had done in Poland, had it not been for the Thirty Years' War.

Conditions in Moravia differed little from those in Bohemia. There, too, Germanization was felt, and the Catholics grew in strength owing to the efforts of the Bishop of Olomouc and the Jesuits. The power of the Estates was almost nil. Against this state of affairs, and in defence of the liberties of the country, fought Lord **Karel Žerotín** (1564–1636), a Bohemian Brother, and a man of great strength of character, common sense, and learning, who had studied in Switzerland, England, Holland, and Germany. The Catholics saw in him a dangerous enemy, and the Bishop of Olomouc, a German named Cardinal Dietrichstein, intrigued against him already when he was Judge of the High Court. Žerotín, however, was on good terms with Matthew, and incited him against his brother, the Emperor Rudolph. When Moravia actually came into the former's possession in 1608, Žerotín was appointed Land-Governor, and religious and political liberties were to a great extent restored. When Matthew, however, succeeded Rudolph on the throne as Emperor, he made Dietrichstein his counsellor, and conditions turned in favour of Catholicism, whereupon Žerotín resigned. Important in connection with the Czech revolt is Žerotín's permanently contrary attitude against the revolution, in which he persisted even after Moravia decided definitely to stand by Bohemia. Žerotín considered the opposition against the Habsburgs as dangerous and inopportune, and probably foresaw the consequences. His loyal attitude towards the Emperor enabled him to plead for Moravia when the time for punishment arrived, and to protect Bohemian Brethren on his estates after the fateful battle.

The most pathetic side of the disaster, suffered after all in the cause of Protestantism, was the betrayal of Bohemia by the Protestants of Germany, upon whom the Bohemian Government chiefly relied, and who repaid them badly for their trust. The chief Lutheran State, Saxony, whose drunkard king also had ambitions to become King of Bohemia, betrayed Bohemia for material gains, and joined the Catholic Emperor. Among the other motives which guided him in this step was not only antipathy against the Calvinistic Palatinate, whose **Prince Frederick** the

revolutionary Czech Government elected to the throne of Bohemia, but also a racial hatred of the Czechs which is known to have animated his Court Chaplain, Dr. Hoe. The Bohemian Estates further reckoned with the aid of England, and of the Calvinistic German Union with the Palatinate (*Pfalz*) at the head, since King Frederick came from the Palatinate and had married the English Princess Elizabeth. But the Union concluded an agreement with the Catholic League to remain neutral and hopes in English aid also failed. Thus through isolation and previous unsuccessful warfare was prepared the last decisive battle which assured Austria her victory. The last betrayal of the Bohemian Protestants by foreign Protestant countries occurred on the conclusion of the Peace of Westphalia, when the Protestant powers, notably Sweden, so forgot their promises, and the services rendered by Bohemia to the Protestant cause, that they even failed to insist on the right of the Czech exiles to return home.

On November 8, 1620, in a short battle on the White Mountain near Prague, was decided the fate of the Czech nation for centuries to come. The Czech lines were soon broken by superior forces, and despite a valiant resistance the Bohemians were soon turned to flight. The war might not have been lost, for Prague could have defended herself until aid would arrive, but the king and the chief leaders, Anhalt and Thurn, lost their heads and fled from the country, leaving it to the mercy of the cruel enemy.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TRIUMPH OF THE ANTI-REFORMATION IN BOHEMIA

“**T**HOU shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel,” was the theme of sermons held in Vienna when the news about the Habsburg victory arrived. “Murder them all without exception,” was the advice given to the Emperor by Don Martin Huerta, who from a tailor and lackey became spy and captain in the imperial forces. The Spanish Ambassador at the Vienna Court likewise advised that the “unholy nation” should be extirpated. And Ferdinand II, who was a man of a weak character and intelligence, and a mere tool in the hands of his advisers, first hesitated and then yielded to those who counselled punishment.

Terrible was, indeed, the revenge of Catholicism, and terrible were the consequences for Bohemia for having dared to stand up for its own freedom and liberty. The sins and mistakes of the Bohemian Protestants were more than expiated by the cruel punishment of the Catholic victors. Nowhere else was reaction carried out so mercilessly and so thoroughly as in Bohemia. It is true that at first it had to proceed slowly and carefully, for it was not an easy matter to turn a whole Protestant nation Catholic overnight, to say nothing of the lack of competent missionaries. The Papal Nuncio Caraffa hesitated, seeing the scepticism of Prince Liechtenstein, to whom the Emperor entrusted the kingdom of Bohemia. But in the end the advice of the local hierarchy prevailed, and drastic measures were decided on. The Emperor’s attitude in the matter has already been mentioned. Another important fact to remember is that Caraffa’s advisers were Germans. They

were the old Archbishop Lohelius (from Eger) ; the Abbot Caspar Questenberg (from Cologne), who was probably the worst of the three ; and, finally, the rather diplomatic Canon Plateis from Saxony, who at least could speak Czech.

The punishment was, in the first place, inflicted on the principal leaders. On June 21, 1621, twenty-seven leaders of the Czech revolt were executed, including Šlik, Budovec, and the learned writer Harrant z Polžic, seven knights, and seventeen townsmen. They died a heroic death, displaying a courage worthy of the Hussite tradition. Budovec returned to Prague of his free-will, though he could have escaped abroad, and on being asked to give up his creed, he replied to the Jesuits : " Long have you thirsted for our blood, so now drink it." Among the others were Kaplíř, a man eighty-six years of age, and John Jessenius, a famous physician and one of the founders of anatomy, whose tongue was torn out before the execution. For ten years the heads of the Bohemian leaders grinned from the tower of the Charles Bridge in Prague, until they were buried with pomp during the Saxon invasion in 1631.

Afterwards followed confiscations of property, which, in principle, affected all who recognized the Directorate of King Frederick. The manner in which this expropriation was executed meant an injustice never undone. The only analogy in history, perhaps, is the expropriation of the Anglo-Saxon nobles after the Battle of Hastings in 1066. The confiscated estates were first sold under price ; then the fine imposed was deducted and the rest was to go to the original owner as compensation. But most of the owners never obtained anything at all, especially if they emigrated. The monies thus due to them were kept by the Crown, and finally a moratorium was declared on the whole debt, which was prolonged right up to the nineteenth century. The sum in question amounted in 1653 to 8½ million guilders, and in 1711 accrued to 22 million. Finally, it was cancelled altogether. The Emperor himself came into the possession of about three-quarters of the whole land of Bohemia. The total value of the confiscations and fines is estimated at some 48 million guilders (24 million pounds), a large part of which was spent on war expenditure and gifts to foreigners.

Altogether some 680 families were sentenced to confiscations conducted by Liechtenstein.

But the chief blow was aimed at the spirit of Bohemia. The best-educated classes were sent into exile, middle classes were impoverished, and Czech spiritual life in general was stifled. During the seventeenth century the Czech language as a literary language became almost extinct. The name of a Czech became again synonymous with heretic, and heresy was to be extirpated at all costs. "Whatever was the beginning, the end will be ours," was the saying of Ignatius Loyola, and the Jesuits followed his advice. "The time of the Jesuits was for Bohemia a period of the deepest decay in national and scientific education; and the Jesuits must especially be blamed for the fact that, after the heavy blows of internal political changes and after the effects of a long war, the reawakening from spiritual slumber took over a century." Such is the verdict of the eminent Czech Catholic historian, Tomek. Another contemporary Catholic historian, Pekař, says: "The brutal violence of the conception of the anti-Reformation and the brutality of its methods were such that as long as Czech hearts will beat, they will not fail to be moved at the recollection of the sufferings through which the happiness of the lives of thousands was undermined or destroyed." The Jesuits, to whom were entrusted all schools, including the University, as well as the censorship of books, did their best to destroy all memories of the past and to corrupt the soul of the people. Almost the whole Bohemian literature was thus destroyed, and one of the Jesuits named Konyas alone was credited with the burning of sixty thousand Czech volumes. Thus by fire and sword Bohemia was being converted to "the only true faith."

The efforts of the anti-Reformation were first directed against the Bohemian Brethren and the Calvinists, especially those who belonged to the nobility. Even before 1620 Catholicism had gained favour among many Czech noble families, such as Liechtenstein, Valdštejn, Slavata, Czernin, and others. The Letter of Majesty had been abolished, but even so the Bohemians hoped that at least the old Utraquists would be spared. They received com-

munion under both kinds from Catholic priests, and only in the veneration of Hus and in the use of Czech in their churches did they differ from the Catholics. Even Liechtenstein and the Bohemian Catholics would have spared them, but the fanatic Catholics were afraid of the very sign of the chalice: the Renewed Ordonnance of the Land (*Obnovené zřízení zemské*) of 1627 permitted no other religion except the Catholic and the Jewish creed. The only justification, besides political motives, which Ferdinand could put forward was the analogous intolerance of the Protestant German States. The wrath of the Habsburgs was directed foremost against the Czechs, as may be seen from the fact that Silesia, the greater part of which was already then Germanized, was allowed continued religious freedom, and there was even a plan by which German Protestants in Bohemia and Moravia were to be spared the effects of the said Renewed Ordonnance. The Habsburgs were obviously always afraid of fresh revolts on the part of the Czechs. The Czech Jesuit Balbin wrote: "They constantly imagine that groves, forests, and valleys proclaim rebellion, and that, therefore, according to Machiavelli, all must be destroyed: castles must be demolished, towns neglected, and the people treated as enemies by means of force and violence, and, if necessary, even by hypocrisy, fraud, and deceit."

From the political point of view it is important that the Habsburgs at that time did not yet dare to abolish formally the independence of Bohemia. The most serious arbitrary measures against the Constitution were taken only between 1748 and 1755 by Maria Theresa, and later by Joseph II. The Renewed Ordonnance of the Land only attempted to restrict the power of the Estates in favour of the Crown, but the Bohemian State never ceased legally to exist, not even after the later centralistic efforts. All the Habsburgs, except Francis Joseph and Charles the Last, were crowned kings of Bohemia. When, in 1804, Francis for the first time took the title of Austrian Emperor, he expressly promised to preserve all the constitutional privileges of his lands and possessions. It would therefore be wrong to speak of 1620 as of the end of Bohemian independence. The struggle was not so much for conquest between Austria and Bohemia as

for the title to the throne between two rival kings. The idea of an Austrian Empire developed much later, even though the White Mountain and the events which followed it were chiefly instrumental in preparing its ground.

Ferdinand II expressly acknowledged the Bohemian Constitution, and the chief change effected by the Renewed Ordinance was the loss by the Estates of the right of initiative in legislation. The free election of kings, which, according to Stránský, the Bohemians also considered one of their greatest privileges, was equally abolished through the declaration of the hereditary of the Habsburgs on the Bohemian throne without the right of the Estates to vote for or against the acceptance of the king. On the other hand, the Estates retained the right to raise taxes and to administer the law, but the Habsburgs assured themselves of the loyalty of this new Parliament by removing all the non-Catholics from the country and by remoulding also otherwise the inner constitution of the Diet. A new ecclesiastical Estate was created, the number and power of the knights were weakened, the towns together obtained only one vote, and the chief decisive Estate, the nobility, changed entirely its complexion through the execution and exile of Protestant lords and through the admission of new foreign families who acquired land in Bohemia and who were mostly of Spanish, Italian, German, and Flemish nationality. The increased power of the nobility was obvious, since in 1615 the nobility held only 36·6 per cent. of land, while in 1656 they held 59 per cent.; the knights' land possessions fell from 27 per cent. to 9·58 per cent. and those of the towns from 23 to 13 per cent. The peasant's position became much worse than before, and on him fell the chief burden of work and toil under despicable conditions. Not only were the peasants being deprived of their religion, and those who wanted to emigrate were forbidden to sell their property, but the physical hardships which they had to endure are to-day almost incomprehensible to us. The peasant being the personal property of his master, serfdom was tantamount to slavery. The peasant had to work for his master during the harvest, often even on Sundays. Disease among the country people was

rampant owing to under-nourishment and bad sanitation. People were clothed in rags, dirty and undersized, and few of their children went to school. Physical punishment, often of a very cruel nature, was inflicted for the least offence or even a failure to comply with given orders. No wonder the peasants often rebelled, two of the greatest rebellions having occurred in 1680 and 1775. And yet it was this downtrodden peasant that remained at home who saved the Czech nationality from extinction through sheer strength of character and doggedness. What a difficult task the Jesuits had with the peasants is clear from the accounts of their persistent refusal to be converted by force, their risings, and their wholesale flights from the country. On the conclusion of the Thirty Years' War there were still 200,000 non-Catholics in Bohemia out of the 800,000 inhabitants that were left. That many people remained secretly Protestant even after the anti-Reformation had outwardly completely triumphed is evident from the large number of persons who declared themselves Protestant on or soon after the publication of Joseph II's decree of tolerance.

The process of Germanization in a systematic manner by means of schools did not really begin until the times of Joseph II. Yet the White Mountain meant a great blow to Bohemia also from the nationalistic point of view, and most of the districts of Bohemia and Moravia which are now partly or completely German were colonized after the battle of the White Mountain. It was only due to the influence of such Czech lords who were Catholics, as Kolovrat, Slavata, Martinic, Lobkovic, and others, that the Habsburgs, of whom before 1620 only Maximilian could speak Czech, did not proceed more drastically against the Czech nationality and satisfied themselves with the proclamation in 1622 of German as equal to Czech in Bohemia. In practice German, of course, soon became, as the officially favoured and only recognized language, distinctly superior to Czech. In 1634 Slavata, a descendant from a family of Bohemian Brethren who, after having travelled a great deal abroad, became Catholic, wrote that it was a good fortune that the Chancellor of Ferdinand III was not a German, since otherwise "many people would have been ready to

scheme about the way in which to extirpate the Czech language." And this was the same Slavata who, behind the backs of his friends Kolovrat, Martinic, and Sternberg, had advised the Emperor to abolish the liberties of the Estates. That prejudice against the Czechs existed even later is proved by the fact that in 1665 Count Vrbna wrote to Count Czernin that he did not believe Václav Lobkovic could become High Chancellor, as he was a Czech, which meant the same "as if he was stricken with a hereditary sin." It is interesting, however, that the sense of their Czech origin had not left completely even such outright imperialists as Slavata and Wallenstein (Valdštejn), a man of insane and reckless ambitions who often used Czech in his correspondence. It was an irony of fate which divided the Czech noble families into two camps through differences in religion. Thus Wallenstein was a brother-in-law of Trčka, one of his lieutenants, but Trčka's brother was a Protestant and his sister married Count William Kinský, a Lutheran living in exile. Count Kinský's brother Venceslas was a Catholic; but they all knew Thurn well and kept up relations with him. In the Lobkovic family Bohuslav Felix was one of those who took active part in the formation of the Bohemian Confession. But Zdeněk Lobkovic was the leader of the Catholic Party in 1618, while another, William Lobkovic, was among those who engineered the defenestration. Among those who were executed in 1621 was also Diviš Czernin, but it was his own brother Heřman who, as a loyalist, supervised the execution.

The prejudice of the Habsburgs against the Czechs brought soon a sound reaction, and it would not therefore be accurate to say that the Czech nationality or the Czech tongue were dead during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, even if that period retarded Bohemia's progress and meant a spiritual slumber and vegetation. The feeling of Czech patriotism remained implanted even in those Czechs who remained at home and were turned Catholic, and whose only intellectual leaders became the priests. Czech Jesuits, such as Balbín (1621-1688), author of a good, though one-sided, history of Bohemia and of a work in defence of the Slav tongue, Pešina (1629-1680), who wrote

the history of Moravia, and Beckovský (1658-1725), who continued the Catholic chronicle of Hájek of 1553, a work of a somewhat doubtful historical value which nevertheless served to preserve the Czech patriotism during the years of darkness—all these authors and others who followed were the forerunners of the Czech reawakening of the nineteenth century. Characteristic is the manner in which Pešina explains that he wrote his work in Czech, “for the sake of his nation’s honour and tongue, and to show that he was a true Czech, without being ashamed of it.” What a great step back this period nevertheless meant for the Czech nation, and what possibilities of intellectual development they missed during this régime of reactionary despotism, may be only guessed by the fact that such great talents as Stránský and Komenský had to leave the country, and by a comparison with other countries which preserved their independence and their liberties. Denis rightly concludes that “from 1618 till 1790 Bohemia had gone through all the anxieties of a death struggle: nailed to the cross by unreasonable and unfeeling fanatics, with blood-covered limbs; despoiled by her masters, who turned a deaf ear to her sobs; sentenced to despair through merciless laws which enslaved the majority of the people and crushed all semblance of liberty; humiliated; menaced in her vital interests and in her language, she notwithstanding preserved the will to live.”

CHAPTER IX

THE EMIGRANTS (KOMENSKY AND OTHERS)

THE economic effects of the Thirty Years' War on Bohemia were considerable: at least one-third of all the land was laid waste after the war, and 22·3 per cent. of all the land was still uncultivated in 1682. The economic exploitation of the country in general was terrible, and, according to Pekař, the Estates could far less oppose it than the curtailment of political independence. The worst calamity for Bohemia, however, was the loss of her intellectual classes.

Emigration from the towns began in 1624. The nobility began to leave the country, especially after the publication of the Renewed Ordonnance in 1627. Altogether about one-fourth of all free citizens thus went into exile from Bohemia and Moravia. The peasants fled from the country wholesale even after 1648, when the anti-Reformation struck its last blows at vindication. According to the latest Bohemian historical researches, the total loss of the population through the war in Bohemia is estimated at about 60 per cent., since former estimates, putting the pre-war number of the population at three million, seem exaggerated. The actual decrease was from two million to eight or nine hundred thousand, but even this decrease had obviously disastrous consequences. Of the noble families alone 30 per cent. (421) left Bohemia.

Strangely enough, the story and the influence of the Bohemian emigrants, whether in Slovakia, Saxony, Prussia, Sweden, Holland, England, or elsewhere, has not yet been sufficiently studied. There was the nobility and others who fought against Ferdinand under Swedish colours; there were artists, such as Venceslas Hollar, who came to England in 1637 and left numerous engravings of great

value ; and the Bohemian Brethren whose spirit still lives in the Moravian Church of England and America, as well as in the Herrn Hut community in Germany, founded by Count Zinzendorff in 1722. Among the offspring of eminent emigrants in Prussia may be mentioned especially Komenský's grandson, Daniel Ernest Figulus, Court Chaplain in Berlin and Bishop of the Bohemian Brethren in Poland and Slovakia, who spent his youth in Poland and England. In Berlin, Figulus had the opportunity of forming a close friendship with certain French religious exiles, including Lenfant, the famous author of the story of the Hussite movement. Figulus had also the opportunity (in 1723 and 1735) of pleading the cause of his persecuted countrymen in Bohemia. But foremost among the literary authors of the emigration during the Thirty Years' War must be mentioned Skála, Stránský, and, above all, Komenský (Comenius), whose name ranks foremost amongst those who contributed towards the progress of humanity.

Pavel **Skála** ze Zhoře (1583-1640), who left Bohemia together with the "Winter King" Frederick, wrote an interesting story of the Christian Church of 1,700 pages.

His greatest value is his description of the contemporary Reformation. Pavel **Stránský** (1583-1657) had to leave his estate in Litoměřice, as he was unwilling to renounce Catholicism and remain in Bohemia as a Bohemian Brother. The Protestant point of view of the times found a competent interpretation in his *Catholic Bohemia*, which is also a valuable description of the Bohemian Constitution (Government and administration) before 1620. Although one-sided, his work is by no means too biased or exclusive, so that even the Jesuit author Valerius Maximilian could recommend it. Stránský censured the nobility severely for underestimating the importance of the townspeople and for oppressing the peasantry. Whereas his ancestors were "in times of need ready to sacrifice their lives and fortunes for their king and country, in these decayed times almost all indulge in preferring their own to the common welfare." In the constitutional question he upholds foremost the independence of Bohemia from Germany: "The Czechs will rather choose to be in whatever

place among the free nations than to be in the first place among voluntary servants." Stránský further asserts that kings in Bohemia were not hereditary, but eligible. Most interesting, however, is his estimate of the Germans, in which he concurs with Dalimil and Palacký: "With the Germans might always weighed more than right, since they are an ambitious, jealous, and dangerous race. They always had only contempt for others, especially those speaking a Slav tongue, and their efforts were directed at enslaving or even extirpating them. They boast that Hungarians, Danes, Poles, Moravians, Swiss, Savoyans, and Dutch are under their influence or else vassals of German kings, whereas if you ask any of these nations they will tell you that it is nothing but German bluff." In the struggle between Czechs and Germans, "the Germans always fought for unjust domination, the Czechs for the defence of their homes and liberties bequeathed to them by their ancestors."

The greatest and most famous of the emigrants was the educator Jan Amos **Komenský** (1592-1670), through whom, in the words of the Czech poet Neruda, Bohemia has inscribed herself in the golden book of civilization. His influence, says Denis, was "hidden and quiet, yet deep and everlasting." Komenský's manifold activities as educator, novelist, philosopher, theologian, historian, and philologist, which he embodied in some 150 works, and his importance for world education and the progress of science in general are of such magnitude that it is impossible to deal with them fully here. Will Monroe's work on Comenius and Count Lützow's translation of *The Labyrinth of the World* enable the English reader who is interested in the subject to obtain further information.

Komenský's life was compared by Palacký to a voyage on a stormy sea. It was certainly troublesome and full of hardship and adventures, for fate forced him to live in exile and constantly move from one place to another. He was altogether married three times—in 1619, 1624, and 1649. In 1628 he definitely left Bohemia to reside abroad, mostly in Lešno in Poland, in Slovakia, and in Elbing on the Baltic Sea. To England he came in 1641, and the English

Parliament was willing to vote a grant for the College which he proposed to found. But civil war drove him soon back to the Continent. He received offers even from America, but he preferred to accept the invitation of the wealthy Dutch merchant de Geer, who then resided in Norrköping in Sweden and whom he visited there, as well as Oxenstjerna in Stockholm in 1642. He promised to write a series of schoolbooks for Sweden, which work occupied him during the next four years in Elbing, in the hope of inducing thereby the Swedes to plead the cause of Bohemia when the time for it should come. His hopes were in vain, however, and in vain also did he write a letter to Oxenstjerna shortly before the Peace Congress of Westphalia: "In the name of many do I write this supplication, and, moved by their sighs, I fall on my knees before thee and through thee before thy illustrious Queen and the whole noble Council of Directors, I beg and implore thee in the name of Jesus Christ not to abandon us who have been martyred for Christ's sake. Look down upon the nation who was the first among European nations to be saved from the darkness of Antichrist, and who, before other nations, accepted reformation and suffered from Antichrist's wrath for over a century. Listen to our prayer so that even thou mayst be listened to by the Lord Almighty." But instructions had already been sent from Stockholm, due probably to the influence of the Catholic queen Kristina, to the effect that Swedish representatives should ask for the amnesty of Bohemian Protestants, but that they need not insist on it if all the other conditions are accepted. Thus, through the Peace of Westphalia, died the last hopes of the Bohemian emigrants, and sanction was given by Europe to the decision of the White Mountain. The year 1648 had also other bitter disappointments in store for Komenský, who then became the Bishop of the Bohemian Brethren, for he lost his second wife. A fatal loss to humanity meant the destruction of his library and manuscripts in Lešno in 1656, including also the *Treasure of the Czech Language*, on which Komenský worked for thirty-four years, and all his pansophic works (*Sylvia Pansophiæ*). Komenský spent his last days in Holland at the suggestion of the son of the old

de Geer, and there he also died in 1670. "It seemed," says Denis, "that when he died he took the very soul of old Bohemia with him to the grave: of the Bohemia whose honour and glory it will ever remain to have first proclaimed the freedom of conscience."

It must be admitted that Komenský suffered in no small degree from the prevalent mysticism of the times, and more especially from the chiliastic belief in the so-called prophets. Yet his great personality and his educational work by far outweigh this weakness. How lofty, for instance, appear Komenský's views on religious tolerance, as even Balbín admits, and on universal peace, which to him, a Bohemian Brother, was the very essence of his convictions. "We all are citizens of one world," says Komenský, "we are all of one blood. To hate a man because he has been born in another country, because he speaks a different language or because he takes a different view on this subject or that, is indeed a great folly. Desist, I implore you, for we all are equally human. Let us unite all our thoughts, so that all that separates us from God, or from one another, may disappear. Let us have but one aim in view, namely, the welfare of humanity, and let us put aside all selfishness or considerations of language, nationality or religion." His advice seems indeed as timely to-day as ever. Religion to Komenský was *res viva, non picta*, and, like Hus, he demanded holy life, not holy words.

Equally timely are his educational ideals, which, even to-day in such matters as universal or popular education and co-education, are far from being fully realized, despite Komenský's great influence on education in general and on such educators as Francke, Rousseau, and Pestalozzi. In education, Komenský in fact saw the only solution for bringing about universal peace, social as well as international. He wanted schools, "which would be provided with good books and sound methods, so that the study of science, morality, and piety would be stimulated." His views on universal education were summed up in the Great Didactic (1638) or "science as to how everybody could learn everything." The aim of educational efforts should, according to him, be to find a way by which those who

teach should teach less, and those who learn should learn more. Teaching ought to be done reliably, easily, thoroughly, and in the right way. Schools ought to become "the workshops of humanity." Education ought to go hand in hand with philosophy. Instruction should be given up to the age of 24 in the following four stages: up to 6 years of age children should be brought up at home or in "mothers' schools" (Kindergartens); from 6 to 12 years they ought to attend public schools, and attendance should be obligatory (this principle was not carried out in England till 1876, in Austria till 1869). Between the ages of 12 and 18 children should attend secondary schools, and afterwards high schools or academies.

Among Komenský's principles are the following:—

1. Education should start early. "All that has just been born is tender and therefore more pliant and easier to bring up."

2. Education ought not to be theoretical, but practical. It should appeal not only to the ear, but also to other senses, and above all it should be logical. Instead of dry memorizing, Komenský proposes to make education more interesting and easier by means of "object lessons," that is, through pictures, maps, experiments, demonstrations of stuffed or live animals, etc. (modern science might add the cinematograph, the gramophone, etc.). "Schools should cease to persuade and begin to prove and convince," says Komenský. Children ought to "cease to believe and begin to know." This marks the dawn of the age of modern science.

3. Children ought to be taught in their native language. This too was a new principle, for even in the eighteenth century instruction in many countries, especially in Central Europe, was given in Latin. Even in more recent times this prerogative of every nation had to be bitterly fought for by the oppressed nationalities in Austria-Hungary and elsewhere. The three million Slovaks in Hungary had, for instance, at the date of their deliverance in October 1918, altogether 240 public schools and no secondary ones. From the point of view of racial freedom, and in the interests of efficient education, this principle seems as obvious to-day as

it seemed to Komenský three hundred years ago, when he considered instruction in any other but the native language detrimental to the character and the progress of the child.

4. Education ought to be universal and an equal opportunity should be given to rich and poor, for all people were born to be reasonable beings and have therefore an equal right to education. Nobody should be excluded from it, for "God wants all to love Him, but love is only there where knowledge is." We do not know for what occupation nature destined men, and often men of the meanest origin are destined to become the most famous.

5. Education should be accorded to all, and not even those who seem slow in comprehension should be deprived of it, for they need it more than the others. Even though they may not excel in knowledge, their moral standard will be raised through learning. Moreover, some people, even though they seem at first slow, get on better than the talented ones because they work harder. It also happens that some people whose brains are quick when they are young become quickly intellectually exhausted, while the brains of others, seemingly slow at first, develop and become powerful later on.

6. Women should not be excluded from the same education which is accorded to men, because as human beings they have equal intellectual capacities. Komenský will hear nothing of St. Paul's saying that a woman should not be suffered to teach. Women, of course, should not be brought up through science to undue curiosity, but to greater wisdom, morality, and happiness.

7. Education should be natural and logical, not artificial or too theoretical. Everything shall follow logically, violence shall be eliminated.

8. Komenský lays great stress on the importance of physical education, which, especially in Anglo-Saxon schools, is so happily harmonized with other instruction. Like Tagore, Komenský does not want to keep children indoors. A healthy mind can reside only in a healthy body, and, besides physical exercise and games, children ought especially to be kept to gardening. A garden and a space for outdoor games should be attached to every school. Children should

also be taught some manual labour (handicrafts) in order to become more practical, to understand all they may need in life and to show their natural inclinations.

9. Among the subjects to be taught, Komenský mentions not only geography, history, natural science, and physics, but also economic and political science, at least in so far as it may help to understand the chief questions which they will meet at home or in public life. Schools should not rest on theories, but should form a link with real life and should bring up free and independent citizens.

10. For grown-up persons Komenský postulates an eight-hour working day: "The day has 24 hours. It is divided into three parts: 8 hours are meant for sleep, 8 for eating, walking, games and other pastimes, and 8 for work." Komenský does not admit that artisans, peasants and women do not need education, as was then generally believed. He wants everybody to be educated in order to have something to occupy his mind with, and to know how to direct all actions and endeavours so as to see God everywhere. Thus, a hundred years before Rousseau, Komenský proclaimed the equality of men and women.

But Komenský believed also in education as the only means to a greater political and other prosperity of nations and of humanity in general. He saw in it the only salvation and way for his nation from slavery to spiritual and political freedom. He also saw in it the salvation for all nations from wars, from social inequality, and from religious intolerance. When will Russia, and many other nations, learn Komenský's lesson and through education enter the path towards a happier future? When will the nations of the world through better education, and a better knowledge of each other, substitute wars and competition by mutual good will and peaceful co-operation?

To Komenský a happy nation was synonymous with an educated nation. In an educated nation "men are foremost human beings, everything is orderly, all serve all, no land is allowed to lay waste, all live in comfort, people think of their future and are thrifty, they dress well, their towns are beautiful and artistic, they abide in law, their country is secure and peaceful, they all have good manners,

no beggars and lazy people are tolerated among them, they are fond of science and art, especially of music, and they are full of the light of reason, good will, conscience, and peace." To be wise means to be capable of many occupations, but nobody can become wise without hard study. Learning is imparted through parents, tutors, schools, good books, contact with wise men, practical experience of life and through a wise administration (government) that affords schools to all and allows people sufficient leisure for education.

Among Komenský's educational works, many of which have unfortunately not been preserved, are especially the following : the *Great Didactic*, the *Informatorium for Mother-schools*, the *Gate of Languages (Janua Linguarum)*, translated soon into English, German, Polish and French, later into Swedish, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, Greek and Arabian, Turkish and Persian, and finally the *Orbis Pictus*.

A collection of all his didactic works was published in Amsterdam in 1657 (*Didactica Opera Omnia*). We have already mentioned some of the educational principles of Komenský. In the *Informatorium* he embodied most useful ideas on little children's upbringing, displaying a great understanding of children's psychology. Children's minds are always active, and must therefore be occupied. The best school for little children is to be with their mother, yet there is no doubt that one child may sharpen the wits of another child better than anybody. First lessons must be easy, given in a playful manner, and every effort should be directed towards settling of the mind first. Many things can be taught even before a child is six, such as good manners, pronunciation, and obedience. The *Informatorium* still serves as a basis in modern Kindergartens. The *Janua Linguarum* suffers from certain defects which Komenský himself realized, for it is in many a respect too difficult for children to learn from, and it contains certain chapters (for instance, one on the birth of a child) which are not quite suitable for the school. Nevertheless, the *Janua* was no doubt, besides the Bible, the most widely spread book of the seventeenth century. Altogether it contained eight thousand words, framed into one thousand sentences under

one hundred different headings. The principle of the book is that a language may be best learnt, not by the memorizing of words, but by the learning of their meaning. This principle is adopted even by the most modern methods of teaching languages, and the book itself could still to-day serve as a useful handbook. In order to make the contents of the *Janua* easier to learn, Komenský, in 1654, put it in the form of eight dramatic plays (*Schola Ludus*), and also wrote an illustrated abridged edition under the title of *Orbis Pictus*. Of the greatest philologic value is considered, however, his *Latest Method of Teaching Languages*.

Komenský's ideal was to write a great encyclopædia, a pansophic work which would unite all that was then known to science, as a "key to the greatest secrets of nature and letters," somewhat on the lines of Bacon's *Instauratio* and Laurenberg's *Tractatio Generalis*, but in a more concise philosophic and uniform manner, with the object of bringing about universal religious and political peace. Although he worked a great deal on this work, however, he never completed it, and only two volumes were published in Amsterdam.

Of his other writings we may mention especially two books, *About Espionage* and *The Mournful* (1624), describing the persecutions in Bohemia after the battle of the White Mountain, as well as the *Labyrinth of the World* (1625), being the wanderings of a pilgrim through the world. The latter work lacks originality in form and reminds the reader of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, More's *Utopia*, Campanella's *Civitas Solis*, Dante's *Paradise*, and other similar works. Nevertheless, it offers interesting reading and shows Komenský's point of view of the world and his philosophic outlook, resulting in a resignation into his own heart. It was, besides the Kralice Bible, the chief treasure of Bohemian emigrants, since, as Count Lützow observes, "its mysticism was very congenial to the Bohemian people, and the variety of picturesque incidents that it contains appealed to an imaginative people." Komenský's pacific ideas are embodied in his work *About the Betterment of Human Affairs*, which in 1717 served James Andersen when he compiled the statutes of Freemasonry. In this work Komenský invites humanity to unite in the building of a new Solomon's

Temple as an abode of justice and love, peace and progress. *The Happiness of a Nation* was a work written by Komenský for the edification of the Hungarians during his stay in Hungary, where he came at the invitation of the Transylvanian Prince Rakoczy, and where he tried to put into practice his pansophistic school. He blamed the Hungarians for their laziness and neglect of education and for "the oppression which prevailed everywhere," which made Hungary known as "the devourer of its own inhabitants." In that country, says Komenský, there is "a medley of nationalities and languages, manners are reminiscent of barbarism, and everything is contributing towards the spoliation of general happiness." These words were indeed true even of the Hungary of the nineteenth century, and Komenský's words that peace was endangered by the constant justified distrust of Hungary's neighbours, are true even to-day. The last two great works of Komenský are his prophetic *Testament of the Dying Unitas Fratrum*, which we quote later on, and the *Unum Necessarium*, which contains the essence of his life wisdom and experience.

Professor Kadner, in his work on Komenský, rightly points out that Komenský's writings lack a firm philosophic basis, inasmuch as they confound scholastic and humanistic views with realism and empiricism, and vacillate between the Bible and Science, trying in vain to reconcile them in pansophic attempts. Komenský's ethics are Christian, yet they also are as rational as those of Socrates or Herbart. His was the dilemma of a man standing with one foot in the Middle Ages, and with the other in the modern age as the protagonist of a new world to come. Michelet called him "*un beau génie, grand, doux, fécond, savant, universel, le Galileo de l'éducation.*" Komenský's knowledge of classic and contemporary writers was truly astonishing. As we pointed out before, his true greatness lay in his educational ideas, in which he was far in advance of his times, and through which he laid the foundations of modern education.

This chapter would be incomplete without a few words about the hopes which Komenský, in common with other emigrants, had entertained during and after the Thirty Years' War in a restoration of the freedom of Bohemia.

Most of the emigrants settled in Germany, in Slovakia, and in Poland. The Unity of the Brethren in Poland was not, in fact, dissolved until 1817. Their hopes were placed not only in such Protestant countries as Sweden, England, Denmark, Germany, and Hungary, but also in the Catholic States of France, Savoy, and Venice, who were opposed to the Habsburgs. Unfortunately all their hopes were in vain, for these States failed to act either simultaneously or at an opportune moment. At the head of the Czechs, who actively fought against the Emperor, stood the enthusiastic, though somewhat fantastic Count Henry Matthew Thurn. He was first in the service of Denmark, then, in 1628, he joined Gustav Adolf. Among the troops which he commanded were many Czechs, including even high officers. Thurn once described his aim in life as follows: "My instructions, my heart, and my mind wish only for one thing, and that is to deprive the Emperor of all." His hopes counted in the first place on the assistance of the Duke of Friedland, Albrecht Valdštejn, or Wallenstein, whose enigmatic, extremely ambitious personality was to be made use of against his master, the Emperor, at the price of the Bohemian throne. Wallenstein, who was jealous of the Emperor, was really too much interested in his own success to care seriously about one side or the other. He declared himself to be ready to accept the proposal, and continued negotiations with the Swedes and with Arnim through his Czech friends in both camps (Trčka, Kinský, Rašín, Bubna). But the plan was never realized, for Sweden, from the beginning, distrusted Wallenstein, and Saxony was secretly jealous of Sweden and did not want to see Wallenstein on the Bohemian throne. But the chief fault lay with Wallenstein himself, because he constantly delayed action until a more opportune moment, a circumstance which some explain through his love of astrology and its superstitions. His vacillation only deprived him of the Emperor's confidence, strengthened Sweden's mistrust, and finally brought about his tragic end. Interesting for subsequent history was especially Oxenstjerna's offer of the Bohemian throne to Wallenstein, and a promise made to him on June 19, 1633, through Bubna, which ought to have been binding even for the peace-

makers of Westphalia, to the effect that "without the return of all exiled gentlemen from the kingdom of Bohemia and other Habsburg lands, and without the restitution of the ancient liberties of Bohemia, whether religious or political, no treaty of peace can be concluded since none of these concessions can ever be expected from the Emperor or from the Austrian dynasty." We have already mentioned how disappointed the Czechs were when Sweden forgot to keep this promise. Equally vain were also all hopes in Hungary (Bethlen, Rakoczy) who always at a critical moment concluded an armistice with the Imperial forces. After the war, the exiles' last hopes were placed in Karl Gustav and in Rakoczy, but these two fought only against Poland and Denmark, not against Vienna. In vain did also Komenský's son-in-law, Figulus, implore Cromwell to intervene.

No wonder Komenský imagined the end of his Unity of Bohemian Brethren had come when he wrote his *Testament*. To the Catholic Church he says: "You were a mother to us, but you became a step-mother," and he implores all Protestants to unite. Thereupon he takes leave of his native country in the following words: "Thee, my Bohemian and Moravian nation, my precious fatherland, I cannot forget in this my last farewell, yet turning to thee in the first place I bequeath the treasures entrusted to me by God." Among these he mentions "the love of God's pure truth, such as to us before all nations has been revealed by our Lord through Master John Hus, and which he (John Hus) with his companions and many other true Czechs have sealed with their own blood," the Holy Bible, the discipline of the Church of the Bohemian Brethren as an example of the original apostolic Church, the service of God, the love of the native tongue, and a better youth. Truly prophetic, however, sound his following words: "Even I believe that, by the grace of God, when the storm, inflicted on our heads through our sins, has passed, the government of thy affairs will return to thee, O Czech people." . . . "What more am I to say? I shall be compelled to cease and give good-bye to thee, my native country. But how shall I? Even as Jacob, the patriarch, gave blessings to his sons on his

death-bed, or even as Moses, when parting from his folk, so shall I, taking the words from their mouths, pray to God for blessings for thee, my nation, that thou mayst be a fruitful bough by a well whose branches run over a wall : the archers have sorely grieved thee and shot at thee and hated thee, but let thy bough abide in strength, and let the arms of thy hands be made strong by the hand of the mighty God of Jacob, even by the God of thy father Who shall help thee, and by the Almighty Who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. Let my blessings prevail above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills (Genesis xlix). May God let you live, O blessed nation, and die, and let not thy men be few. Bless, Lord, his substance and accept the work of his hands : smite through the loins of them that rise against him and of them who hate him, that they rise not again. Let the time come when other nations will say : Happy art thou, O Israel : who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency ! And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee ; and thou shalt tread upon their high places (Deuteronomy xxxiii). Salvation belongeth unto the Lord : thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah."

CHAPTER X

CZECH REAWAKENING (UP TO 1848)

THE Czech national reawakening at the beginning of the nineteenth century was not a miracle. Just as the establishment of Czechoslovak independence in 1918 was the inevitable result of historical development, and forms only a part of the general reconstruction of Europe, so also the spiritual rebirth a hundred years ago formed only a natural parallel to, and coincided with the awakening of, the national consciousness of other nations in Europe. While the eighteenth century signified the triumph of anti-Christian rationalism and cosmopolitanism, brought about by the first triumphs of science (Kopernik, Kepler, Newton), the nineteenth century saw the birth and development of the democratic, social, and national idea. With the principle of nationality accomplished, the world will now progress towards internationalism, not cosmopolitanism. Tagore rightly says : " Neither the colourless vagueness of cosmopolitanism, nor the fierce self-idolatry of nation worship is the goal of human history."

The birth of nationalism in Europe is sometimes ascribed to the dismemberment of Poland. Lord Acton says : " This famous measure, the most revolutionary act of the old absolutism, awakened the theory of nationality in Europe, converting a dormant right into an aspiration and a sentiment into a political aim." While we do not wish to dispute that it really was a powerful impetus to nationalism, we would nevertheless far rather ascribe the rise of nationalism to the influence of the French Revolution and the principles which it proclaimed. The pupils of Rousseau, Komenský's heir, the romantics, became the first protagonists of modern nationalism. It surely was more than a mere coincidence that the sense of nationality woke up

simultaneously among the Finns, the Czechs, the Magyars, and the Balkan nationalities. The Serbs rose first under Kara George in 1804, afterwards the Greeks, the Rumanians, and the Bulgarians. But the principle of nationality, the principle that every nation had an equal right to freedom and independence, was not easily vindicated: Serbia and Rumania became independent in 1878, and only under Gladstone did England approve of the "bag and baggage" policy for Turkey. The national aspirations of the Balkan peoples were not, in fact, satisfied until the final dismemberment of Turkey in 1913 and of Austria-Hungary in 1918. The collapse of the latter and of the Russian Empire enabled also the national aspirations of the Czechoslovaks, Poles, and Finns to be fulfilled.

Even the enemies of Russia will, however, admit that the problem of Russia was somewhat different from that of Austria. On the other hand, the problem of Turkey presented many similarities and underwent also a similar solution. In 1902 M. Albert Sorel wrote: "For a century past attempts have been made to solve the Eastern question. On the day when it appears to have been solved, Europe will inevitably be confronted with the Austrian question."

But national consciousness became a moving force not only in the Balkans and on the Danube. In its name Italy began her struggle for unity and independence in 1831 under Mazzini, Garibaldi, and Cavour, and achieved her object almost completely in 1860. In Germany the problem of national unity resolved itself into the question as to who should rule supreme in a Greater Germany: Prussia or Austria. It is noteworthy that the peaceful effort of the Frankfort Parliament of 1848 failed, and that the unity of Germany had to be achieved in the words of Bismarck, "not by speeches and majority resolutions, but by blood and iron." In Russia the chief nationality questions centred in Poland, in Finland, which till 1808 was under Sweden, and to a lesser extent in the Baltic provinces and in Ukraina. The Poles tried in vain through many revolutions, especially those of 1830, 1848, and 1863, to regain their liberty, and their oppression by the Russian

Government formed, for a century, an unfortunate obstacle to a complete understanding amongst the Slavs.

The exact causes for the rise of nationalism are difficult to find, the most natural explanation being that it was the result of the progress of civilization towards democracy. The chief impetus no doubt came from the French Revolution, which proudly proclaimed the sovereignty of the people and the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity—principles which for a long time Bohemia considered her own and therefore now again accepted readily. French armies were looked upon as liberators by subject peoples, and it was not until the “liberated” peoples realized that they became merely subjects of a new despot that they turned against Napoleon. So general became the awakening of the nationalist spirit in Europe that the allies against Napoleon themselves thought opportune to invoke it by issuing a proclamation that “nations would henceforward respect their mutual independence. . . . The object of the war and of peace is to secure the rights, the freedom, and the independence of all nations.” The Congress of Vienna opened in 1814 with similar high-sounding phrases on “the reconstruction of the moral order,” “the regeneration of the political system in Europe,” “enduring peace founded on a just redistribution of political forces,” a permanent international tribunal, and disarmament. As a matter of fact, Germany and Italy were put back where they were in the eighteenth century, Poland was left dismembered, Norway was for a century yoked to Sweden, and Belgium to the Netherlands, while no attempt was made to solve either the Austrian or the Turkish question. Castlereagh conceived the idea of a Council of Powers, “endowed with the efficiency and almost with the simplicity of a single State,” but he little understood the truth that efficient internationalism is impossible before the vindication of the principle of nationality.

England has, on the whole, pursued a policy of aloofness in Continental affairs during the nineteenth century. Only once did she actively intervene on the Continent, and no English statesman, except perhaps Disraeli, had any Continental aspirations. This “splendid isolation” has, how-

ever, been rather a source of strength than of weakness, since it enabled Great Britain to act freely. She never liked to intervene unless her vital interests were involved. Her attitude has always remained the same, as defined by Canning in 1823: "England has no sympathies with revolutionaries and Jacobins. Nevertheless, she insists on the right of every nation to choose its own government and to administer its own affairs so far as it does not interfere with the affairs of other nations." It was this attitude which prompted England to abstain from any Continental struggles, whatever were the principles or interests involved. British policy was concerned more with the balance of power in Europe than with the freedom or self-determination of nations. England had a great deal of sympathy for Poland, for instance, but when Castlereagh pleaded for the independence of Poland in 1814, more than by mere sympathies he seems to have been actuated by considerations of practical policy, since he rightly saw in Poland a possible buffer-state between Russia and Germany. It was, indeed, the Polish question which bound Russia to Germany for a whole century. Also in 1848 Palmerston seems to have been more concerned with the balance of power than with the liberty of nations. The fear of Russia seems for a long time to have haunted British statesmen and it was also for some time shared by France: de Toqueville saw in Germany a barrier against the East! Germany, of course, always knew well how to profit from this fear of pan-Slavism and of "barbaric Russia." This fear of Russia also explains to a great extent the traditional friendship of England for Turkey and Austria in the past. Palmerston rebuked Austria for crushing the Magyar Revolution of 1848, nevertheless he considered Austria a necessity for Europe in the sense of Palacký. The substitution of Austria by national States and the reduction of Austria to a second-rate State Palmerston considered "a European calamity which every Englishman would have to deplore." In the same way, England sympathized with Turkey, and for a long time refused to recognize Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece. Meanwhile, Bismarck, who knew and said that "the master of Bohemia would be the master of Europe," succeeded in

gaining the friendship of Austria by sparing her territory in 1866, and ingratiated himself with Russia by helping her to crush the Poles. The problem of his policy became how to reconcile the friendship of Russia, the natural protector of the Slavs in the Balkans and in Austria, with the friendship of Austria who was to become his accomplice in the grand pan-German scheme of Berlin-Bagdad—which was to enslave these Slavs. The reason why Russia remained friendly to Germany was not only the Polish question, but also the attitude of England, who, through Lord Beaconsfield, declared in 1878 against Russian influence in the Balkans. It was only later, after the conclusion of the Triple Alliance in 1882, when the pan-German plan became more pronounced, that Russia began to look more towards the West for friendship. Obviously the problem of Poland and of the Austrian and Balkan Slavs, living in what Professor Masaryk called “the danger-zone of Europe,” indirectly caused the European conflagration, and deserves, therefore, more than a passing notice. It is as a part of this problem, and as an outcome of the rising spirit of nationalism and democracy in Europe, and not as a mere internal problem of the former Habsburg Empire, that the Czechoslovak question must be looked upon and understood.

The reawakening of the Czechoslovak national consciousness was not a miracle, yet it was by no means a small accomplishment. Although the peasantry still spoke Czech at the end of the eighteenth century, the middle and upper classes would have perhaps shown little resistance to the energetic Germanizing efforts of Joseph II and his successors had the Germanization set in earlier than this period, which also marked the rise of nationalism and democracy in Europe. Even so, the task which lay before the few Czech patriots to revive their native language as a literary language and to arouse the people from lethargy was not inconsiderable in view of the difficulties they had to surmount.

In this connection a reference must be made to the constitutional changes which Bohemia meanwhile underwent. Under **Ferdinand III** (1637-1657) the Bohemian

Estates still had enough courage to defend their privileges. **Leopold I** (1657-1705), on the other hand, did not seem to have any serious intentions to curtail their rights, since he was a coward who only pretended to be an absolutist. He was a typical member of the degenerate, weak-minded Habsburg dynasty, a walking caricature with his lower lip characteristically hanging down. Equally insignificant were also his successors, Joseph I and Charles II, and it was not, therefore, until the reign of **Maria Theresa** (1740-1780) that serious arbitrary measures began to be taken against the Bohemian Constitution. Maria Theresa, though herself conservative, nevertheless yielded in many respects to the spirit of the times and prepared ground for the radical reforms of her son. The Bohemian nobility, in whose hands lay the fate of Bohemia, became unfortunately by that time so demoralized, egoistic, and servile to the dynasty that, unlike the Hungarian nobility, they offered almost no resistance to the new centralistic efforts. The Bohemian Chancery was suppressed, and administration was entrusted to imperial officials. The Estates could henceforward only discuss how, not whether, a law could be carried out. Up to 1749 Habsburg dominions formed a dynastic confederation of States. Since then, however, an attempt had been made to substitute the old system, based on historical, geographic, and political grounds, by a new, centralistic system. The Bohemian and Austrian lands were subjected to a single government of Directorates, whereas the position of Hungary remained almost unaffected. Thus was laid the first basis to the dualism of 1867, which was the real cause of Habsburg downfall. The Habsburg Empire, destined by historical and natural conditions to become a confederation of equal nations and to play the rôle of a champion of peace in Europe, violated its mission by handing over the Slav majority in Austria to German domination, and in Hungary to Magyar tyranny. This was the real cause of the inner weakness of Austria-Hungary, which made it impossible for Austria to follow an independent policy, and which made her practically a vassal of Germany.

The arbitrary measures of Maria Theresa, consisting of

the establishment of a State Council in 1760 and of an Austro-Bohemian Chancery in 1762, were chiefly directed at the strengthening of the Royal power. The prerogatives of the Estates were reduced to mere formalities, especially when military and foreign affairs were exclusively reserved to a common Ministry in Vienna in 1801.

Joseph II (1780-1790) brought this centralism to absurdity; and yet this enlightened despot did much, without wishing it, to wake up the national consciousness of his subjects. Whatever may have been his faults—and present historians agree that his intelligence was only mediocre and superficial, and that above all he lacked all sense of realities—his intentions were certainly good. Influenced not a little by the rationalism of his century, and ruled by ideas which he accepted for his own, he carried out many measures which broke the Great Wall of China that up to then had enclosed his realm. In the opinion of Albert Sorel, his whole activity meant a veritable revolution. His measures alleviating serfdom and introducing religious tolerance and freedom of the Press earn him justly our admiration and gratitude. There was a great influx of books from abroad during his reign: Hume, Voltaire, Rousseau, Wieland, Lessing, Kant, Herder, Schiller, and Goethe, could be freely read, just as any old books which were being reprinted. Bohemia could begin to breathe freely again, for despite his Germanizing efforts, Joseph II was more tolerant than Maria Theresa, who even forbade Pelcl to reprint Balbín's treatise on the Czech language in 1775. Denis, therefore, calls, rather paradoxically, Joseph II "the forerunner of Dobrovský, Jungman, and Palacký."

Joseph II was, nevertheless, a despot. It was his opinion that "it is necessary to bring about the happiness of nations even against their will. Just as in a republic rules the despotism of law, so in a monarchy must rule the despotism of principles." This idea sounds strangely familiar to us who nowadays hear so much about the blessings of Communist ideas to be accomplished through the "dictatorship of the proletariat." But just like the Bolsheviks Joseph II failed owing to a lack of the sense of reality. Not only were his measures often rash and premature, but

they also ignored certain essential facts of existing conditions, such as the impossibility of converting by force whole populations to an uniform nationality. His centralistic efforts provoked opposition from the conservative nobility and the bureaucracy, and the general Germanization ranged against him even the common people of the Slav provinces, who otherwise had reason enough to love and respect him. Devotion to the native tongue after all remained a deep-rooted instinct which not even the down-trodden Slav peasant was ready to part with. It is therefore difficult not to agree to Joseph II's own words about himself: "Lazy by nature, without much zeal, superficial, careless, I must to my shame confess that I am not so thorough as I appear to be, and my only good qualities are my enthusiasm and my honesty when the good of the State is at stake."

It remains a question as to how far Joseph II really favoured centralism, for in the beginning his plans included the establishment of a sort of trialism. The Empire was to consist of the Bohemian lands with Galicia on the one hand, and of the Austrian lands and Hungary on the other, a plan which even later (for instance in 1816) Czech patriots cherished. But his German advisers unfortunately soon dissuaded him from this, for them, dangerous course. In 1782 the executive in Bohemia, hitherto in the hands of a Land Commission, was handed over to royal officials, and the burghers were strengthened against the nobility; and yet even Joseph II recognized explicitly the independence of Bohemia.

The most important changes which took place at the end of the eighteenth century were not of a political, but of a social and religious character. We have described the pitiable condition of the peasants, reduced to misery through forced labour, famine, and disease, and from time to time rising in vain against this slavery. Joseph II himself said, on returning from a visit to Bohemia: "My heart is bleeding. Poor Bohemia is groaning and receives only written promises instead of help." Through the decree of 1781 peasants were no more the personal property of the lords, and they were allowed to buy the right to their land. Even

though this did not mean absolute freedom (serfdom was completely abolished in Austria only in 1848), it was a great step forward.

The religious conditions remained almost unaltered until the times of Joseph II. In 1751 censorship was taken from the Jesuits, whose order was abolished by Clement XIV in 1773. After 1749, however, persecutions against non-Catholics were as strict as ever, and death was the punishment meted out to those who held secret religious meetings, offered refuge to secret missionaries, or spread "heretic" books. Among the causes of the peasants' revolt in 1775 was also the wholesale confiscation of heretic books and the transportation of three hundred peasants to Transylvania. But not even Austria could remain wholly unaffected by the rationalism of the eighteenth century. At Joseph II's instigation new instructions were issued in 1777, that "the knowledge of the true faith is a rare gift from God and may be achieved only through convincing arguments of the clergy, not through violence." In 1781, at last the two chief Protestant creeds (Calvinist and Augsburg confessions) were permitted. At the end of Joseph II's reign there were forty-five thousand Protestants in Bohemia.

An interesting fact is the existence of various secret sects (Nihilists, Atheists, Deists, Israelites, etc.) among the peasants during the eighteenth century, brought about no doubt, as in Russia, by the forcible exclusiveness of the official Church. These dissenters often believed only in God and the Ten Commandments, and refused to believe in Christian mysteries and revelations which they declared opposed to reason. In 1783 one hundred and twenty of such peasants were deported to Transylvania, and on another occasion Joseph II ordered some to be thrashed "for their pigheadedness, not for their faith," because they believed in something which they did not understand. Among the educated flourished not only Freemasonry but also secret societies (Illuminati, the Rose Cross adherents, etc.), which declared every religion a fraud. No doubt the influence of French rationalism was largely responsible.⁴

Rationalism, which gave birth to the French Revolution, produced a crisis in the spiritual life of Europe, against

which emotional romanticism meant a rather wholesome reaction. Religion ceased to be the cause of discord among nations, but it did not cease to be a spiritual force. Greater religious tolerance promoted the freedom of philosophy and helped to deepen religion rather than to wipe it out. The philosophic problem of the meaning and conception of life, and of the significance of religion for the mental peace of mankind, became the guiding theme of such diverse new-age thinkers as Goethe, Mickiewicz, Björnson, Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky.

As regards the Germanizing efforts of Joseph II and his successors, their seriousness may be gauged from the fact that every possible means—the schools, the Church, the administration, the nobility, the German colonists—were used to promote them. The Habsburgs conceived the stupendous idea of bringing about the unity of their possessions by forcing the German language even on those of their subjects who could not speak it and who formed the majority of the population. Already in 1765 the Bohemian Governors were instructed “to promote the general use of the German tongue.” Germanization through the schools was, however, quite a new thing, because hitherto schools were not too numerous and the language of instruction in colleges was Latin. The attempt to Germanize through the schools would have been very serious indeed, but fortunately it did not succeed, in any case as regards the public schools, owing to the lack of German-speaking teachers. Germanization produced a nationalist reaction, the first success of which was the establishment of a lectorship of the Czech language and literature at the Prague University. But the Czech movement was at first underestimated by the Germans. Such was the success of Germanization, at any rate among the educated classes, that even those Germans who, like Goethe, sympathized with the national movement in Bohemia, thought the Czechs would never be able to revive the national tongue as a literary language again, all the more as the movement had in its beginnings no political character. Their scepticism is not surprising considering it was shared not only by the Bohemian nobility, amongst whom many had a more or less academic

sympathy with the movement, but even by many of the Czech patriots themselves. Thus Jungmann said in 1827: "We have come, though I trust I am mistaken, to be the witnesses of the final doom of our native tongue." Dobrovský, and, later, Šafařík and Kollár, entertained similar fears. On the other hand, Palacký, who possessed rare qualities of political foresight and statesmanship, declared emphatically against such scepticism, saying: "If we all behaved like that, then truly our nation would have to perish from spiritual starvation. I, at any rate, even were I the last offspring of a Gipsy tribe, would still consider it my duty to do all in my power that an honourable memory should at least remain after it in the history of humanity." To speculate to-day whether the fears of the Czech patriots were justified seems a difficult and fruitless task. Probably some of them were not conscious of the inner spiritual strength of the movement and the general support it received among the lower classes. The lack of self-confidence was natural in view of the humble position of the Czech peasant and of the Czech language at that time, as well as in view of the powerful resources at the disposal of the Germanizing rulers.

The political history from the reign of Joseph II up to 1848 offers little subject for comment. **Leopold II** (1790-1792) was a cold egotist and a careful diplomat, who tried to appease the nobility, so sorely grieved at the blows that their feudal rights received at the hands of Joseph II. Serfdom was renewed almost to the same extent as it had existed under Maria Theresa. The petition of the Bohemian Estates for the restitution of their feudal claims, opposed only by Count Sternberg, who saw the futility of a policy courting the hostility of a whole class of the nation, included also a modestly styled claim for the restitution of the kingdom of Bohemia on the basis of the Renewed Ordonnance of 1627. But Leopold bluntly refused to accept this Constitution, or, indeed, any semblance of an agreement between the king and the Estates as a basis of negotiation. The only concession was the restoration of the Land Commission. The Bohemian nobility accepted his decision with a resignation which once more proved the lamentable weakness on their part whenever the defence of the

historical rights of Bohemia were concerned. Far more imposing was the speech of Dobrovský, delivered on behalf of the Czech patriots in the presence of Leopold II, in which he asked the Habsburgs to protect the Slavs and their language against the Germans, and pointed to the powerful resources of Russia as a warning that the Slavs would no more submit to extirpation like their brother Slavs on the Elbe.

The real restorer of reaction in Austria, however, was **Francis II** (1792-1835). Under him and under the weak-minded **Ferdinand** (1835-1848) Austria just drifted on, stiff in her desperate absolutism, stupid, and insolent rather than cruel or despotic. Until 1866 Austria remained, as head of the German Confederation, the centre of anti-revolution and reaction in Europe, and even later she remained behind other countries in cultural, political, scientific, and economic progress. Like the German rulers, the Habsburg dynasty ruled by divine right alone, its bigot spirit never adapted itself to the era of growing democracy, and it therefore forfeited its right to a loyal recognition by its subjects, whom it understood little and treated badly. In 1804 Francis accepted for the first time the title of Austrian Emperor, and in 1806 he renounced the crown of German Emperor, thereby breaking also all connection between Bohemia and Germany. Altogether, credit must be given to the Habsburgs for defending Bohemia against the encroachments of Germany. The right of Bohemia to take part in the elections of the German Emperor was not exercised during the seventeenth century, but it was readmitted in 1708. Maria Theresa and Joseph II insisted on the legal sovereignty of Bohemia. Territorially the Habsburgs did not succeed in preserving the Bohemian lands quite intact. Lusatia was lost during the Thirty Years' War and annexed to Saxony. The last formal rights to Lusatia were renounced at the Congress of Vienna. During the eighteenth century the Hohenzollerns consistently strove to dismember Bohemia, but fortunately without success. Through the Peace of Berlin in 1742, Frederick II nevertheless obtained the greater part of Silesia, one of the historical Bohemian Crown lands, and also the Kladsko district in North

Bohemia. Since the Congress of Vienna the territories of the Bohemian lands (Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia) remained unaltered up to 1918.

The soul of the Austrian reaction prior to 1848 was Prince **Metternich**, a figure notorious enough to all students of European diplomacy during the nineteenth century. As an advocate of the then existing order he naturally resisted all nationalistic upheavals in Italy and elsewhere, and his fear of Russia caused him to oppose similar efforts of the Balkan peoples and to be friendly towards Turkey. Nevertheless, he seems to have felt that Austria could not really become a German State, and could not therefore remain the leading member of the German Confederation, which position she held between 1815 and 1866. The first article of the German Confederation Act of June 8, 1815, provided that the Austrian Emperor, with all his possessions which had formerly formed part of the Holy Roman Empire, join the Confederation. This was meant to include all his lands excepting Italy and Hungary.¹ Nevertheless, in his *Memoirs* Metternich, not without good reason, wrote: "Friendly relations between Austria and Germany may exist only for the attack and the defence against external and internal enemies, because Austria is a Slav-Magyar State. . . . The public was surprised because I censored the German Press more than the Magyar, Czech, or Jugoslav. It was not because I wanted to suppress liberties, but because I wanted to prevent the union of the Austrian Germans with Germany. The Czechs have no affection for Germany and that ought only to please the Austrian Government." In reality, of course, Metternich by no means favoured the Slavs, but continued in the Germanization begun by his predecessors, the only excuse that we may find for him being that he lacked the courage and the strength to introduce a new system. Thus he became a stern conservative whose only object was to preserve the established traditions and to suppress all that to him seemed liberal and revolutionary. This conservatism was not a little due to the influence of the dynasty, opposed to any consti-

¹ See next chapter regarding Palacký's argument against the inclusion of Bohemia in the German Confederation (p. 152).

tutional changes. In justice to Metternich it must be admitted that he was aware of the truth that Austria could preserve her existence only as a confederation. He confessed that, "while Hungary enjoyed privileges which hampered the whole body politic, the other lands were exhausted through centralization." But he could draw no consequences from these premises, for, among other reasons, he had to obey Emperor Francis, who, in his apathy, was determined that no changes should take place. Metternich resigned himself to his wishes, remarking once that he felt like St. Simon, who stood on one foot on a pillar. As Denis says, he stood so long that he became quite stiff, and when he said he was going to move, everybody smiled incredulously, including himself.

The aim of his policy became the preservation of the *status quo*. Metternich also continued to use religion as a means towards attaining political ends, a circumstance which did a great deal of harm to religion in general and the Catholic Church in particular, and which remained ever since the curse of political life in Austria. To Metternich, Catholicism appeared particularly useful as "a creed which deprives people of the courage to think unusual things and to examine things independently."

In order to give an idea of the regime which prevailed in Austria up to 1848, we may only mention that public libraries, opened in 1781, were again closed under Francis II. In 1801 the Censorship Commission condemned 2,500 literary works, published and circulated since 1780. Universities were not allowed to keep contact with universities in other countries, and travelling abroad was wellnigh impossible. Officials were servile and corrupted, religious indifferentism prevailed. The police became an important organ of government and made the life of intellectuals intolerable. Palacký wrote in 1832: "Stupidity rules over us: the censors behave absurdly and Secret Service persecutes all manifestations of the spirit of nationalism and of spirit in general." The older works now again prohibited included Komenský's *Didactic* and Všehrd's legal writings from the fifteenth century. Šafařík and Kollár were charged with spreading pan-Slavism, and Palacký was

hampered in his historical work because he took the part of John Hus and condemned the verdict of the Constance Council, etc. The Czech movement was thus becoming not only nationalist, but pre-eminently liberal and democratic, inasmuch as it had to struggle against a Government which remained entrenched in mediæval absolutism. At the time of Metternich both the Slav and the German intellectuals were united in their struggle against Viennese reaction, and both proclaimed the native language to be the most important attribute of national consciousness.

A few words must be said about the part which the Bohemian nobility played in the Czech regeneration.¹ Before 1848 the nobility was, indeed, the only political factor which could voice Bohemia's claims, and it may at once be said that, as a class, they have not fulfilled their rôle as leaders of the nation. They have long since become estranged from Bohemia's history and national traditions, as well as from the people's needs, and their only concern lay in their class privileges. The gulf dividing the Czech people and the nobility became only more pronounced during the second half of the nineteenth century, when the latter definitely identified their cause with that of the Germans, or at any rate of the dynasty. Nevertheless, justice must be made to those few Bohemian nobles who, at the beginning, had sympathy with the oppressed people, and who did not quite forget the national traditions. The first place among them deserves Count Francis Joseph **Kinský** (1739-1805), a man greatly influenced by rationalism, an advocate of better education and an opponent of the oppression of peasants. Kinský belongs to the first Czech patriots who stood up for their native language, especially in education: "I admit that as a Slav I inherited the prejudice that if a Frenchman's tongue is French and a German's German, a Czech can only use Czech as his language." Another of these liberal nobles was Count Francis **Nostic**, whose sons were taught by Dobrovský. A rather prominent figure under Metternich's regime was Count Francis **Kolovrat**, a

¹ An important contribution to the study of this question will be found in the book of Professor J. Hanuš, *The National Museum and the Czech Regeneration* (Prague, 1922).

belated pupil of Joseph II's liberalism, who showed a certain friendliness towards the Czechs and was, therefore, suspected of being the head of a conspiracy against Vienna, but who, in reality, never liked to expose himself for the national cause, and on the whole behaved very timidly. This list would be incomplete without the names of the two Counts Thun and of Count Sternberg.

The family of **Thuns** came originally from Tyrol and acquired property in Bohemia during the Thirty Years' War. Count Joseph Mathyas Thun (1794-1868) had a somewhat condescending sympathy with the Czechs, and declared in 1845 that he was neither a Czech nor a German—a sentiment expressed often since also by other Bohemian nobles. So much the more interesting is, therefore, his admission that equally foolish as cosmopolitanism is the idea that Austria is a nation, because the Habsburg Empire is, if not a federation of States, at least a federation of nations. A more sympathetic personality was Count Leo Thun, younger brother of Joseph Mathyas, who, from 1849 till 1860, was Minister of Education. He knew well England and France, and as a pupil of Bolzano had liberal ideas on education. He remained, however, an aristocrat. Although he did not believe the Czech cause would succeed, his work on Czech literature (1842) and on the position of the Slovaks of Hungary (1843), in which he protested against Magyar oppression, earned him the sympathies of Czech patriots. Count Kaspar **Sternberg** wrote as early as 1786 some of his letters in Czech and followed with sympathy the Czech movement. It was he who turned Goethe's attention and sympathy to it, though, of course, neither he nor any other Bohemian noble believed in its success. Their interest remained rather academic and in any case they were convinced that Czech would soon become a dead language. Many followed the movement platonically, but very few understood its portents. If some of them accepted the Slav programme, it was only because it offered them certain advantages. On the other hand, in Hungary, the nobility placed themselves from the beginning unreservedly in the forefront of Magyar nationalism. The example of the Hungarian nobility's energetic opposition to absolutism in

1832 prompted also, on the initiative of Count F. Deym, the Bohemian nobles to a similar act. But how little the Bohemian nobility really knew of Bohemia's, and therefore their own rights, is obvious from the fact that in 1843 the Estates, then still a close aristocratic body, requested Palacký to enlighten them on the question of the Renewed Ordinance of 1627. They claimed their rights in 1812 and 1847, when an address had been presented to the Emperor in the form of "Deductions, being an exposition of the legal continuity of the constitutional rights and liberties of the Bohemian Estates." Needless to say, however, their efforts remained without success, since they were not founded on any firm strength of the will or force of resistance, and they served only to arouse undue optimism among the credulous Czech patriots, notably of Palacký. Palacký unfortunately overestimated the good will and the sympathies of the nobility by judging the whole class after the few exceptions he knew. In any case, it is certain that the Czech regeneration was not due to the Bohemian nobility, but, above all, to men of science—to such scholars as Dobrovský, Šafařík and Palacký.

In the early Czech movement there are at least three different phases. The first Czech patriots, amongst whom Dobrovský occupies by far the most prominent position, were pupils of humanism and rationalism. The general welfare of humanity was their object, to which the language and nationalism served only as a means. The period between 1815 and 1840 was, on the other hand, influenced rather by romanticism, and by such men as Rousseau, Goethe, and Herder rather than Voltaire or Lessing. This second period, which marks the commencement of the literary and nationalistic revival, produced Kollár and Šafařík. The period that followed represents a further step forward inasmuch as in it the Czech movement acquired a more pronounced political character through Palacký and Havlíček. Even though neither Dobrovský nor Havlíček in their realism may be called the followers of Komenský, their personality undoubtedly represents in a much greater measure the truthful, frank, and deep-founded spirit of old Bohemia than the rather artificial Kollár, trying in vain to

become a second Mickiewicz by expressing poetically the romantic side of Slav nationalism. The first search after humanism was followed by the idealization of the Slavs and finally by the realization of the Czech spirit itself. The irony of fate would have it that the first Czech patriots were in no small degree influenced by German philosophy ; Dobrovský and Kollár by Herder and Fries, Palacký by Kant, etc., and that thus German philosophy in no small degree contributed towards the awakening of the anti-German Czech nationalism. The great Czech preachers of Slav solidarity knew very little, it seems, of Slav literature and the Slav world in general. This explains their great illusions regarding Russia, which even later were not quite dispelled. Owing to German influence, however, the spirit of their works was not always as Slav as that of the great writers of contemporary Poland or Russia, such as Mickiewicz, Krasinski, and Slowacki, or Gogol, Lermontov, and Puškin, whose influence in Bohemia was unfortunately very small indeed. That is, perhaps, one of the reasons why Kollár's work falls short of the work of these Slav writers.

Yet in justice to the Czech patriots it must be emphasized that their task was by no means easy. They had to study their past in order to realize their duties for the future, or, in other words, to join the present on to the past. They had to raise the education and self-confidence of the people, and to revive the Czech language as a literary language after almost two centuries. They had, in short, to re-create the spiritual life of the nation. For that the conditions were by no means favourable. It is, therefore, not surprising that the first Czech efforts in literature, which after all exists only as an expression of an already developed national culture, were extremely handicapped and fell short of the standards of other literatures.

If it was Rousseau who, in the middle of the eighteenth century, preached the return to nature, sought happiness in modesty and simplicity, proclaimed the right of all to education and welfare, and gave birth to the rise of romanticism and democratism, it was **Herder** (1744-1803) who first formulated the principle of nationality. To Herder the State was an artificial creation, because

humanity is by nature divided not into States but into nations: "The most natural State is a State inhabited by a single nation with a single national character. A nation is as natural a growth as a family, only it has more branches. Nothing seems to be more opposed to the aims of government than an unnatural increase of the territory of a State or a wild conglomeration of different human races and nationalities under one sceptre." This philosophy undoubtedly influenced the Czechs a great deal. Inasmuch as English, French, and German rationalism may be traced in, or at least resemble, the ideas of spiritual freedom proclaimed by the Czech Reformation, we may also trace a connection between the idea of the Czech regeneration and the spirit of Bohemian history. Palacký, at least, as we will later show, consciously sought to find this connection in order to elucidate the historical mission of Bohemia, and Masaryk, in his *Czech Question*, endorsed the philosophic continuity of the Czech Reformation in the Czech humanistic reawakening. On the whole, the movement was, however, essentially an outgrowth of the new age, as we have shown in the first part of this chapter, and had little direct relation to the past.

The most striking personality among the first Czech patriots was undoubtedly Josef **Dobrovský** (1753-1829). Although an ex-Jesuit, Dobrovský belonged to the many liberal Czech priests of the period. He was a Freemason, and throughout his work he placed science, reason, and humanity above all. It is impossible not to be struck by the similarity of his character with that of Hus or Masaryk as regards frankness and love of truth, unselfishness and kindness of character, to which were foreign all hatred and jealousy; a sincere affection for the people and their traditions, and last, but not least, a critical attitude even in questions on which public opinion was sensitive. In his style, Dobrovský was concise and witty, free from sentimentalities. In all questions he asked for "proofs, not suggestions or declamations." No wonder that his attitude in scientific questions, founded on careful consideration, was invariably sound. To mention only one instance: he was against the invention of new words in Czech and against all

such artificial philologic experiments, which were not infrequent among the first Czech patriots. Dobrovský advocated a strict adherence to old Czech and to the living dialects in the formation of a modern literary Czech language. It is natural that this creator of Slav philology, author of a Czech grammar and of a study on the foundations of old Slav, was a sincere patriot, a Russophil and a believer in the future of the Slavs. Yet he was not exclusive in his patriotism: "What after God is there more sacred than one's own native country? Yet I want to be useful even to foreign countries and to all humanity." He condemned Germanization, but not the Germans. As to the Slavs, he believed, like Kollár, that they were destined to be bearers of a new civilization.

A great influence in Bohemia was no doubt also exercised by the Catholic professor of the Prague University, Bernard **Bolzano**. As a pupil of Kant, Bolzano was a rationalist, and demanded, in the spirit of John Hus, religion to be a moral code of love and progress, condemning at the same time all that he considered superstitious and opposed to reason in Christian dogmas. He insisted that his pupils should believe only that which seemed to them proven and what they were convinced was true, in the words of St. Paul: "Examine all and hold on to the best." His frankness and kindness gained him many friends, but also many enemies, who charged him with heresy. Only the great authority of his friend, Dobrovský, saved him from persecutions.

A notable service to Czech literature was rendered by the great regenerator Josef **Jungmann** (1773-1847), who, nevertheless, as scientist and philosopher, lacked the conscientiousness and broad-mindedness of Dobrovský. In compiling the first great Czech dictionary he did not hesitate to create new words, usually borrowed from other Slav tongues, where the spoken Czech language lacked them. Through this work and through his history of Czech literature, as well as through his translations of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Chateaubriand's *Attala*, Jungmann rendered a signal service to the Czech cause, and to him falls the lion's share of the merit for the revival of the Czech as a literary

language, for which Dobrovský so ably prepared the ground. His example was soon followed by wide researches of folklore, folk-songs, and popular poetry by Kollár, Šafařík, and Čelakovský, stimulated also, no doubt, by similar efforts in other Slav countries, especially in Serbia, where Vuk Karadžić published a collection of Serbian songs in 1815.

The first modern Czech poet was **Kollár** (1793–1852), but his greatness lies more in the enthusiasm with which his *Slava's Daughter* inspired the Czechs than in the inner value of the work. It was not a mere accident that Kollár, like Šafařík, was a Slovak and a Protestant. In Slovakia the original language has been preserved in a purer state than in Bohemia and the national and religious traditions were not so forgotten. Both Kollár and Šafařík accepted readily Rousseau's and Herder's ideas. It was also natural that idealistic pan-Slavism should have been born in Slovakia, which forms the centre of the Slav world and where the old Slav has been best preserved. Further, the Slovaks are comparatively few and their position is not very fortunate, and therefore they were always the most ardent supporters of an understanding among Slavs, from which they expected their own salvation. This pan-Slavism, founded on the idealization of the past and of the future mission of the Slavs, was chiefly literary, non-political. In Bohemia pan-Slavism was romantic, nevertheless it remained comparatively rational in so far as it expected salvation from the general progress of humanity, while the Polish Messianism of Mickiewicz and the Russian pan-Slavism (or rather pan-Russism) of Kirějevský expect the salvation of humanity from religion—the former from Catholicism, the latter from Russian Orthodoxy.

Kollár interpreted the world importance of Slav regeneration under the influence of Herder's philosophy. He over-emphasized the peaceful character of the ancient Slavs and the bad sides of the German character. His historical philosophy was founded on the faith that the past belonged to the Romans, the present to the Teutons (including the Anglo-Saxons), and the future to the Slavs. From the Slavs he expected the solution of the world problem of a peaceful co-operation among nations. But it must be said that the

first Czech patriots were Slav patriots in a rather abstract sense. They preached Slav solidarity, friendship, and reciprocity, since there was too little self-confidence in them in their own strength, and they even dreamt of a uniform Slav language. They could well preach friendship, since the Czechs had no quarrel with any other Slavs and their own literary language was in a process of re-formation. The Slav languages are certainly more related to each other than, for instance, Spanish, French, and Italian, nevertheless they are independent living languages and cannot be artificially abolished and united any better than, for instance, the Scandinavian languages, which are so similar to each other. How illusory, further, was Kollár's idea of Slav reciprocity is obvious from the by no means friendly political relations between the various Slav nations, especially between the Poles and Russians, who, throughout history, fought for supremacy in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, and between whom a bitter feud arose in the nineteenth century owing to the subjugation of the greater part of Poland under Russian rule. A similar feud arose also between the Serbs and Bulgarians in recent history, owing to the undue ambitions of the latter. From the parallel example of Scandinavia it may, of course, be assumed that when all the Slav nations will have achieved their freedom and independence, their mutual relations will be characterized by the same happy friendship and co-operation as mark the relations between Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. Slav solidarity, not union, may then at last become, in the interests of universal peace, a reality. A hundred years ago this ideal was, at any rate, far more remote than to-day, and, so far as it had any political aspect at all, it presented itself differently. The Austrian Slavs, in their desire for freedom, looked naturally to Russia as their liberator, for it was Russia who stood up against Napoleon's tyranny and as a protector of the Balkan Slavs. The Austrian Slavs also worked for friendship at least amongst themselves, in the hope of being able to transform Austria, where the Slavs were in a majority, into a Slav power. Among the South Slavs (Jugoslavs) the movement for national unity and independence, and for Slav solidarity,

was first voiced by L. Gaj. Concretely speaking, Slav solidarity really meant foremost Czecho-Yugoslav solidarity. Unfortunately for themselves the Habsburgs were slow in realizing the advantage that might have accrued to them had they accepted the Austro-Slav idea for their own.

Of a more permanent value than Kollár's work was the work of **Šafařík** (1795-1861), who, with Dobrovský, remains to this day an authority in questions of Slav philology. His work on *Slav Antiquities*, his history of Slav literature, and his work on the origins of the Slavs made him known among all the Slavs and fitted him well to act as President of the Slav Congress in Prague in 1848.

We have remarked before that the Czech movement was not exclusively nationalist, but that it had also a distinctly democratic and social character. The fight for national freedom in itself involved the fight against Austrian absolutism. Since the nobility took part only half-heartedly in the national movement, it soon became chiefly the concern of the lower classes, and thus acquired also a social character. It must be remembered that serfdom was not completely abolished till 1848, and that also the position of industrial workers in those times was by no means easy. Bohemia became quickly industrialized. Already in 1792 the production of Bohemian industries was estimated at 35,000,000 guilders. The introduction of machinery meant at first great misery to textile and other workers, especially as working and social conditions were not controlled by legislature. The Socialist doctrines of St. Simon and Fourier, therefore, found a ready echo in Bohemia. It was chiefly **Amerling** who, between 1835 and 1848, devoted himself to the workers' cause, and imagined that Bohemia would once convert Europe to the religion of peace and justice through better education.

It was also during this period that the Slovaks decided to use their own dialect as a literary language in order to be able to fight more effectively against Magyar oppression. The conditions in Slovakia were somewhat different from those in Bohemia. Anti-Reformation had never been so severe as in Bohemia, and became more pronounced only under Leopold I. Consequently many Protestants, mostly

Bohemian emigrants, have remained in Slovakia. Early during the nineteenth century religious differences divided the Slovaks into two parties, Catholic and Protestant. The centre of the Protestants was in Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, which already then was greatly Germanized. Here studied Kollár, Šafařík, and Palacký, as well as the greatest Slovak poet of that period, Palkovič (1769-1850). The centre of the Catholic party was in Trnava, and it was its member **Bernolák** (1762-1813), who first advocated the use of Slovak as an independent language and wrote a Slovak grammar and dictionary. The definite separation of 1844 was, however, the work of Ludevít **Štur** (1815-1856) and Miloslav **Hurban** (1817-1888), both of them Protestants. Štur's idea in itself was good: he wished, above all, that both the Slovak parties should unite in their opposition to the Magyars, and that the people should be roused from their lethargy by being given books written in the vernacular, since Czech books would not be so easily comprehensible. Notwithstanding the opposition of Kollár and Šafařík, the reform was carried, and was met, of course, with many recriminations from the Czechs. To-day, impartial Czechs and Slovaks agree that it really meant more harm than good to both branches of the Czechoslovak nation, because it is more than doubtful whether the Slovaks of Hungary really profited from this literary separatism in their struggle against the Magyars, while it certainly created an endless source of misunderstandings between Czechs and Slovaks. Philologically it is proved that Slovak is only a dialect of Czech, differing less from it than the Lancashire from the Kentish dialect. This view is endorsed by such authorities as Professor Brugman, of Leipzig; Professor Leskien, of Leipzig; Professor Mikkola, of Helsingfors; and many others. Slovak has not developed so much as Czech, and therefore has retained many forms that are to be found in old, but not in modern, Czech. The question has been summed up by Professor Jagič, who said that the Slovak dialects, though forming a motley of dialects, are connected through the medium of Moravian dialects with the language of Bohemia, and together with it form one linguistic unit. Historically we have shown that Slovakia

formed in the beginning part of Moravia, from which it was separated only by the Magyar invasion, and there is no doubt that Moravia and Bohemia were always inhabited by the same race. The difficulty of to-day of co-ordinating Slovakia with the rest of Czechoslovakia is of a purely administrative and educational character, arising from the fact that up to 1918 Slovakia lived under the political regime of Hungary and was from every point of view more neglected than the Bohemian lands.

The third period of the Czech regeneration, the commencement of the political struggle of Bohemia for independence, is dominated by the personalities of the great historian Palacký and Mazzini's pupil, Havlíček. From the idealistic dreams about the mission of the Slavs, Bohemia at last wakes to the realization of her own self, in order to proceed forwards towards the final goal of freedom and liberty.

CHAPTER XI

PALACKÝ AND HAVLÍČEK

IN principle nationality ought to be to humanity that which division of labour is in a workshop : the assertion of the individuality of a human group, called by its geographical position, its traditions, and its language to fulfil a special function in the European work of civilization. The map of Europe has to be re-made. Such was the call of Mazzini in 1848, which had to wait seventy years more before being quite complied with.

Nevertheless, the year 1848 as a milestone of European history appears to us to be of such importance that it behoves us to devote more space to it than is consistent with the rest of the book. In the first place, the year 1848 brought social and national upheavals throughout Europe. Further, it marked the end of Metternich's mediæval absolutism and the dawn of the era of the so-called constitutionalism in Austria, and it wiped out for ever the curse of serfdom. Never, except during the Great War, was Austria so near a break-up as then, for in Budapest revolution had broken out, Lombardy and Venice fell away from Austria, and the Austrian Government hardly dared to have any will of its own under the terror of the pan-German mob of Vienna. Finally, it was a year which stirred also Bohemia profoundly. In 1848 the Czechs manifested for the first time openly their political aims, and this year therefore marks the beginning of the political struggle of Bohemia for autonomy. The first Czech political programme, as then framed by Palacký and Havlíček, the two most prominent leaders of this period, remained indeed the guiding thread of the whole subsequent Czech policy. Their philosophic outlook and their principles, no less than certain weak characteristics of Czech political life, which became

manifest in 1848, remained typical even during later development, and deserve, therefore, special notice.

Absolutism in Austria received a severe moral blow already in 1830 through the revolutions in Paris and in Poland. It was, like the Russian revolution of 1916, a "Mene Tekel" clearly inscribed, which made the partisans of the old order in Vienna tremble in fear lest also their end was at hand. In England the Tories had to yield to the Whigs, and an electoral reform was carried. O'Connell demanded a repeal of the Act of Union. Chartism and Peel's Free Trade principles aroused also Havlíček's interest.

The political background of the movement in Bohemia had already before become more and more pronounced despite the vigilance of the Absolutist regime. The first Czech political programme was probably formed in 1845, and the influence of Palacký on it is obvious. Its chief idea was Austro-Slavism: Austria as a federation of free nations was to form a bulwark both against Germany and against Russia, as well as against the "separatistic spirit of ultra-Magyarism." It was opposed to pan-Germanism, pan-Slavism, and every form of national Chauvinism. The Czechoslovaks were to attain complete autonomy within this federation through the union of the historic lands of the Bohemian Crown (Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia) with the Slovaks of Hungary. This was a combination of the historic and the ethnographic principle, advocated by Palacký and adopted also by the Peace Conference in 1919, when the frontiers of the Czechoslovak Republic were fixed. Political life in Bohemia was greatly stimulated by the activities of Havlíček, who, at the age of twenty-five, became in 1846 the editor of the *Prague Gazette* after extensive travels in Poland and Russia, and who, in April 1848 started the first Czech political newspaper, the *Národní Noviny*.

Havlíček, on the whole, accepted Palacký's programme and fought together with him against empty Radicalism among the Czechs and against the absolutism of Vienna; and yet there was in many respects a great difference in outlook between him and Palacký. Francis **Palacký** (1798-1876) was an aristocrat in appearance, in associations, and

in spirit. His patriotism and his political ideas were sometimes too abstract, which was no doubt due to his historical researches. Palacký devoted, indeed, practically his whole life to the history of Bohemia up to 1526, and it is therefore only too possible that his thoughts were absorbed too much in the rather distant past and that his outlook was influenced thereby. He feared not only monarchic despotism, but also democratic demagoguery, "the masses," of whom he knew little. His outlook was, theoretically, strongly aristocratic, since he was in favour of "government by the best," meaning the aristocracy. His abstract thinking and his historicism, which occupied his mind with events which passed before 1526, and which prevented him from keeping in direct contact with and from understanding the people, explain also his constant efforts in later years to conclude an agreement with the Bohemian nobility and to win them over to the national cause.

On the other hand, Karel **Havlíček** (1821-1856) was a thorough democrat both in his convictions and in spirit.¹ He was even in favour of social reforms and, unlike Palacký, advocated general and equal suffrage for all. Frank to the point of ruthlessness and vulgarity, with a critical mind always ready for satire and witticism, he never spent much time in studying history and archæology. Rather than to the past, he looked to the present and the future. Even in his political programme he accepted Austro-Slavism, but on ethnographic principles only. The union of Czechs and Slovaks was to Havlíček a vital question for both. Although a journalist, Havlíček hated all superficial thinking, always tried to be "honest and reasonable," never descended to cheap demagoguery like so many other popular prophets, wrote clearly yet moderately, and, above all, possessed a thorough legal knowledge and a keen sense of reality. These gifts equipped him with admirable qualifications as a national leader during the critical year of 1848 and the subsequent period of reaction, during which he remained alone on guard voicing the sentiments of his people, until finally he

¹ Like Gladstone, Havlíček was a prophet of nationalism only because he was a prophet of liberalism, and as such a hater of all oppression. National freedom to him was synonymous with political freedom.

succumbed to a premature death at the age of thirty-five, after having suffered from endless persecutions and unjust imprisonment.

The following are a few dates concerning the events of 1848: On January 12th a revolution broke out in Sicily; on February 22nd, in Paris; on March 3rd, in Hungary; and on March 13th, in Vienna. On March 15th Metternich fell and a Constitution was promised. On March 18th revolution broke out in Berlin, and also throughout Italy. In Bohemia the action against absolutism was at first conducted in common by Czechs and Germans. The secret Radical Society Repeal, which included both nationalities, summoned a public meeting for March 11th, held in the so-called St. Venceslas Baths. A committee of twenty-seven members, Czechs and Germans, was elected to press the demands of the assembly, which were moderate enough, including chiefly freedom of the Press and of religion, abolishment of serfdom, equality of treatment for both nationalities, and a reform of the Diet, which was to become a legislative body for the Bohemian lands. The nobility held aloof from this action of the people, obviously unwilling to part with the privileges hitherto enjoyed by the Bohemian Estates. Only when revolution broke out in Vienna did they declare their willingness to co-operate, and Count Deym proposed that a general Diet of all the Bohemian lands be summoned, but this offer of the nobility came too late and was not accepted. The Emperor replied to the Bohemians in a Cabinet Letter on March 23rd, referring them to the Constitution promised by him on March 15th, but insisting on the continuity of the Estates. Serfdom would be abolished before the end of 1849 and equality of languages would be observed.

A new address was then composed by Dr. Brauner which disputed the Cabinet Letter and demanded administrative union of the Bohemian lands and a responsible Government with its seat in Prague. The reply of the Viennese Government, dated April 8th, seemed more satisfactory. The question of the competence of the Diet for all the Bohemian lands, it was declared, would be left to the Imperial Parliament, but in any case the Bohemian Diet would receive

increased powers. In the meantime, on April 2nd, the new Bohemian Land President, Stadion, appointed an advisory Council to carry out the preparations necessary for the promised Constitution of March 15th. The Council consisted chiefly of nobles, but it included also some Czech and German politicians. Mistrusting the nobility and wishing to take over the leadership, the Czechs elected their own National Committee on April 10th, which ultimately was joined by Stadion's Council. The National Committee was now chiefly concerned with the electoral reform of the Bohemian Diet as outlined in the Cabinet Letter of April 8th, and the Committee's proposals were sanctioned on May 15th. Meanwhile, on April 15th, Bohemia received a new Land President in the person of Count Leo Thun, who fixed the elections to the Diet already for May 18th and its opening for June 7th. Protests against this haste were raised both by the National Party (Dr. Brauner) and by the Radicals (Arnold Sladkovský). The opening of the Diet was therefore postponed, but the elections were to be carried out before June 15th. Thus 300 deputies were elected, out of whom 178 were Czechs, but the elections could no more be completed in Prague, where meanwhile, during Whitsuntide, riots had broken out. Owing to these riots the Bohemian Constitutional Diet never met.

Of great importance for the events of those days was the intervention of the young and able Czech orator and political leader, Dr. F. L. **Rieger** and of Count **Nostic** with the Emperor, who had taken temporary refuge in Innsbruck, in order to obtain his sanction for the establishment of a provisional executive in Prague. The establishment of such an executive was pressed on Count Thun soon after the Viennese riots of May 20th. Under the impression of the events in Vienna, Thun actually decided not to obey the Viennese Government any longer, and proceeded in conforming with the proposals made to him. He thus appointed eight members of what may be called the Provisional Bohemian Government. Two of the members, Rieger and Nostic, were sent on May 30th to the Emperor. The Minister Pillersdorf, however, took prompt steps to frustrate these efforts, and the Emperor's councillors advised him to

adopt an unfavourable attitude to Czech demands. The Emperor therefore refused, even before riots broke out in Prague, to recognize Thun's Provisional Government, which thus in reality never functioned, because the Emperor would not consent to any step which "would imperil the unity of the Empire." Such is the statement of the case made by Dr. B. Rieger (*Osvěta*, 1907). The point is important since it has often been alleged that it was only the Whitsuntide riots which prevented the execution of the concessions obtained by Rieger and Nostic from the Emperor. Even such an authority as Professor Kalousek says that "the Emperor sanctioned the established Bohemian Government." On the other hand, Dr. Tobolka (*Česká Politika*, vol. iii. p. 118) expressly states that "in Innsbruck no concessions were made to the Czechs at a time when the barricades were not yet up in Prague." All that the Emperor did grant was a mere confirmation of the Cabinet Letter of April 8th, viz. his approval that the Bohemian Diet should work out the Constitution, pass taxes, and abolish serfdom. It was to finish its sittings before the opening of the Imperial Parliament. We will later deal with the question as to whether the importance of Whitsuntide riots was really as great as was thought by the Bohemian patriots.

The united front which both Czechs and Germans at first presented against absolutism disappeared soon before the rising tide of nationalist feeling. The first sitting of the *Frankfort Vorparlament* was held on March 31st, and its pan-German tendency affected the Germans of Bohemia so that soon afterwards they adopted a hostile attitude towards the Czechs and demanded the assurance of German predominance in Bohemia and the union of the whole of Austria with Germany. The feelings of the Germans became yet more embittered when Palacký wrote his famous reply to the invitation received from Frankfort, in which he outlined the reasons for which the Czechs could not participate in a pan-German Parliament. In the first place he saw no legal or historical connection between Germany and Bohemia which would necessitate such a participation. Further, he pointed to the danger which would threaten the non-German nationalities of Austria if Austria were to lose her

sovereignty and become absorbed in a Greater Germany. In regard to Austria, Palacký cherished no great illusions: "In critical times we always saw this State, destined to be the bulwark against Asiatic invasions, helpless and hesitating. In an unfortunate blindness this State has never understood its own true interests, and has always suppressed its moral duty to accord to all races justice and equality of rights." Nevertheless, he still hoped that Austria would realize this moral duty and would become transformed into a federation as a bulwark against Russia and Germany. Such a federal Austria he considered a necessity for Europe. "If the Austrian State did not exist we would have to endeavour to create it in the interests of Europe and of humanity itself." It was this vain effort at transforming Austria, as a predominantly Slav power, into a bulwark of peace that formed the melancholy background of the Czech policy almost up to the outbreak of the Great War. Palacký himself, however, gave up all hope in the future of Austria after the establishment of Dualism, and declared that, since Bohemia existed before Austria, she would exist also after her.

The attitude of the Vienna Government towards the Frankfort Parliament was insincere. Austria emphasized the international character of all her relations with Germany, but, being herself a member of the German Bund, she saw the possibility of an association of German States only with herself at the head. Elections were ordered to the Frankfort Parliament even in Bohemia, and the Czech National Committee protested in vain against this, to them, unjust and inopportune step. The Czechs, therefore, abstained from voting, while the opinion of the Germans was voiced by Deputy Schilling, who declared that Austria could exist only as a German State and that no concessions should be made to the subject nationalities which could endanger German predominance. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that many Germans remained loyal in their local patriotism towards Austria and Bohemia respectively. The Magyars had already then arrayed against themselves through oppression the Slovaks, the Croats, and the Rumanians of Hungary, and looked, therefore, to the Germans for support.

They sent two delegates to Frankfort in order to give practical expression to Kossuth's declaration that "the Magyar nation is bound to maintain the most cordial relations with the free German nation and help it to safeguard Western civilization." This meant in practice that the Magyars would help the Germans to oppress the Slavs of Central Europe, and thus render them a useful service in the establishment of pan-Germany.

With the example of Frankfort before them the Czechoslovaks summoned a *Slav Congress* to Prague in order to formulate a common Slav programme. This task was by no means easy, for reasons which we have mentioned before. There is no unity of language and civilization among the Slavs, who, on the contrary, are divided through differences of character, temperament, and tradition. The members of the Congress had themselves only very vague ideas as to what should be the concrete programme of the proceedings. Palacký wanted the programme to include above all the idea of Austro-Slavism, but the Poles (Malisz) wished for a programme common to all the Slavs, including those in Germany, Russia, and the Balkans. The soundest view, it seems, was held by Havlíček, who wrote to the Poles when inviting them to the Congress :

An understanding between us, the Czechoslovaks, and the Poles would be to the mutual advantage of both nations, especially under the present circumstances when everything, even the break-up of Austria, may be anticipated. I am sure that if the Government pursues its present policy Austria will fall to pieces before the next winter and the Czechs are not going to save her. The Czechoslovaks, the Poles, and the Jugoslavs, united politically and supporting each other, will surely sooner or later attain their object, which is to obtain full independence, national unity, and political liberty.

When the Slav Congress at last met at the end of May 1848 the points of the agenda included such questions as 'Is the Congress for a defensive alliance of the Slavs of Austria? How could Austria become a federation? What wishes has the Congress for the Slavs outside of Austria? Is the Frankfort Parliament competent for any Austrian Slavs?' The Congress then passed a number of resolutions

in favour of Polish-Russian understanding, liberation of the Slavs from the Turkish yoke and abstinence from Frankfort, which caused alarm among the Germans and Magyars. The Congress was attended by Poles from Galicia and Germany, by Ruthenes, Jugoslavs, Czechs, and Slovaks, and also by one Russian (Bakunin). It resolved into three subdivisions: a Czechoslovak, presided over by Šafařík; a Jugoslav, presided over by Stamatovič; and a Polish-Ruthene, under Liebelt. On June 12th a manifesto was issued, composed by Zach, Liebelt, Bakunin, and Palacký, appealing to Europe for justice, for the restitution of united Poland, and against the oppression of the Slavs by the Magyars and the Turks. The manifesto declared against political pan-Slavism, but in the name of liberty, equality, and fraternity it demanded freedom for all nations. As a thousand years ago, the Slavs again wanted their own and others' freedom, and they demanded "a general European Conference of nations to deal with international affairs." The Congress ended prematurely through the Whitsuntide riots.

The question of the *Prague Riots* of 1848 is interesting, since this was the only attempt at a revolution during the whole Czech movement, which in this respect differs considerably from other similar nationalist movements. It must, in the first place, be emphasized that these riots were really no organized attempt at a revolution. The question as to whether a revolution was admissible or advisable was negatived both by Palacký and Havlíček, and armed revolts were altogether at all times discouraged by the leaders of Bohemia. Palacký stood against all violence, declaring that "whenever we won victories, it was always through spiritual superiority rather than through physical power." As he himself testifies, he warned several times the National Committee against every appeal to violence which would weaken the moral position of the Czech cause. Havlíček likewise was against armed revolution, believing only in a spiritual revolution to be achieved through better knowledge and education: "Let us work for our aim within the limits of the law, and let us fight with the aid of spiritual resources as hitherto, since we lack material resources.

Let us always rely in our struggle on true democracy, which from the commencement was the background of our national effort. Herein lies our salvation. All progress is best achieved in a rational way and without violence. Heretofore men died for the honour and welfare of their nation : let us for the same object live and work." Not even the extreme Radicals were in favour of a Revolution at all costs, although they glorified the riots as a great deed, whereas the National Party deplored it. Palacký wrote in 1872 of the riots as "an event which had disastrous and fatal consequences." This view seems, however, exaggerated, and to-day we are inclined to think that the Radicals (Frič) were right when they declared that even without the riots the Czechs would not have obtained anything in view of the Bach reaction, which would have followed in any case. The direct instigators of the riots are not known, but it is admitted by both parties that the cause was purely accidental, and that the riots were not aimed at the existence of Austria. As a matter of fact, it seems that the Austrian Government itself did not really take the riots too seriously. Palacký blames Magyar *agents-provocateurs*, whose tools the Radicals became, and it seems beyond doubt that such agents were present. The riots started quite casually from demonstrations by students and unemployed against the presence in Prague of the notorious reactionary Commander Prince Windischgrätz, who came to Prague on May 20th in order "to save Bohemia for the Emperor." The rash action of the military, who opened fire on the mob, caused barricades to be erected in the town. The Radicals, led by Frič and Fastei, made a mad attempt at organizing a revolt *a posteriori*, and the Russian anarchist Bakunin started together with the Slovak patriot Štur to agitate among the people, but, of course, the riots were in a few days suppressed by the military and order restored. The riots served the Austrian Government as a pretext for dissolving the National Committee and prohibiting the sitting of the Bohemian Diet. The riots also widened the gulf dividing the nobility from the rest of the nation. We may now briefly sum up subsequent events. The first Austrian

Parliament, exclusive of Hungary, met in Vienna during the month of July, and was attended also by 78 Czech deputies. The total number of the Slavs exceeded 190 and constituted the majority. The Czechs were perhaps the most advanced of them, since their deputation included many prominent experts in legal, constitutional, financial, and economic questions, whereas, for instance, the Slav delegation from Galicia included even illiterate peasants and priests, besides magnates and aristocrats. The Czechs formed a united National (Liberal) Party under the leadership of Palacký. The Slavs in general formed the Right and stood for the Federalist idea, while the Centre was Conservative, in favour of the preservation of the *status quo* in Austria, and the Left was radically pan-German. In October fresh riots broke out in Vienna against the Vienna Government, and partly also against the presence of the Czechs, who stood by the Government. In November Parliament was transferred to Kremsier in Moravia in order to work out the Constitution. On December 2nd Francis Joseph ascended the throne. The Parliament continued its work, but after the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution reaction was on the horizon and its first step became the dissolution of the Kremsier Parliament. The Constitution was imposed by a Decree on March 4, 1849, and although it was mainly based on the proposals of Parliament, it was framed so as to suit better the wishes of the dynasty. A period of reaction, coupled with the name of Bach, followed for ten years and silenced once more all political life in Austria. But the work begun in 1848 bore its fruit, and absolutism in its blindness now only prepared its own grave through senseless repressions. Its failure became manifest, when Austria suffered defeats at Magenta and Solferino in 1859.

In examining the Czech policy of 1848 and later we must, above all, make allowances for the circumstances in which the Czechs found themselves and which were not of their making. A comparison with Hungary will make this at once clear. Hungary never suffered from such oppression as Bohemia during and after the Thirty Years' War. The religious persecutions were especially harmful, and it is

clear what a forcible conversion to a different creed must mean to the moral and spiritual strength of a nation. The Hungarian nobility, unlike the Bohemian, never became estranged from the national traditions, and consequently Hungarian autonomy never suffered so much at the hands of Maria Theresa and her successors as Bohemia. This naturally meant a great political setback and made the task of Czech leaders of modern Bohemia very difficult, even without taking into consideration that they lacked completely in political experience. In view of the powerful means in the hands of the Vienna Government, and in view of the political conditions in Austria, which were far from democratic, the position of the Czechs was very difficult indeed. Only if we take all these circumstances into consideration can we understand why the first Bohemian national party, lacking the self-confidence of experience and altogether greatly handicapped, followed in 1848 and 1849 almost blindly the Government, daring seldom to act independently. The absurd extreme to which this sometimes led is illustrated by the fact that even when their own speaker, Dr. Rieger, spoke in defence of the originally proposed Constitution, his party voted with the Government against it. Palacký's weakness lay in his small experience in practical politics as opposed to his great authority in questions concerning Bohemia's history.

It is clear that the ultimate aim of the Czech policy was the attainment of *political independence*. Masaryk says in the *Czech Question* (1895, p. 96) that "the falling back on our past led naturally to an effort for the restitution not only of cultural and national self-reliance, but also of political independence. . . . Our regeneration will only then have been achieved when we shall attain our self-government in some form of political independence." How uncertain, however, the first Czech leaders were in political questions is shown by the fact that in 1848 Palacký thought the Czechoslovak nation too small to exist as an independent State without being absorbed either by Prussia or by Russia. He held the view that small States could exist only in the Middle Ages, while the tendency of modern times was for the formation of great State units, and he therefore

considered also such nations as the Magyars, the Jugoslavs, the Poles, and the Rumanians too small to exist independently. The Radicals, who formed a fraction of the united Nationalist Party, included both Nationalist and Socialist extremists, and demanded complete independence. Nevertheless, the uncertainty of their programme is clear, because their leader Frič assured the world in 1848 that "no one of us is against Austria." The Radicals sympathized with the Slovaks and Croats, who rose against their oppressors, the Magyars, but they sympathized also with Kossuth, in whom they saw the enemy of Absolutism. Liberalism generally was understood in a rather one-sided, nationalistic sense, for in November 1848 even the Radicals rejoiced when Windischgrätz went to suppress the revolt in Vienna. Altogether Czech Radicalism appears to have been very shallow and superficial. It was a strange medley of Anarchism, Communism, pan-Slavism, and Cosmopolitism, and the only apology we can find for it is that it had really very few partisans. But uncertainty of programme, inner weakness, and inconsistency seem to have characterized the Czech policy in general. Among the most inconsistent was even Dr. Rieger, who in Kremsier spoke against the nobility and was for the abolishment of aristocratic titles, but in 1860 concluded an agreement with the nobility. The need of less words but more deeds was often felt in the Czech ranks. Šafařík must have been conscious of the weakness of all the talk about pan-Slavism when he said at the Slav Congress in Prague: "Let us prove by deeds that we are worthy to call ourselves Slavs, or else let us cease to be Slavs. Moral death is the worst. From servitude there is no other way towards liberty except through fighting for it. Let us, therefore, either have victory and national liberty, or else an honourable death and glory after it." In reality the Slav programme resolved itself into Austro-Slavism and Anti-Magyarism, which implied the support of the Habsburg dynasty. No serious effort for a better understanding among Slavs was made. The action of the Slovaks and the Croats (Jelačić) against the Magyar revolution was natural enough from the nationalist point of view, but inconsequent from the point of view of Liberalism.

The undue trust of the Slavs in the Austrian dynasty and Government has cost the Slavs dearly. Finally, the uncertainty of political outlook appears also from the fact that not even the anti-Frankfort attitude was so deep-founded as it might appear. Palacký was not in principle against a union of a federalistic Austria with Germany, and Rieger even wanted to go to Frankfort after the Kremsier Parliament had been dissolved.

What to us seems of greater importance than the practical politics of 1848 is the historical philosophy of Palacký and the personality of Havlíček. The guiding idea of Bohemian history, as it appeared to Palacký, is the religious idea, and the Czech awakening only signifies a continuation of the ideals of the Czech Reformation. To Palacký the Czech Reformation was not merely a theological question, but a moral question. In Palacký's opinion Catholicism has despoiled Christianity, which in itself is sufficient for humanity at all stages of civilization, through insisting more on dogmas than on the morality of life, and also through direct moral corruption. Protestantism, on the other hand, proclaimed freedom of thought, subject only to the authority of the Bible. Nevertheless, Palacký sees less discrepancy between Catholicism and Protestantism than between Christianity and Agnosticism, and calls, therefore, for peace and understanding among all the Christian Churches, the more so because Protestantism, especially Lutheranism, became itself dogmatic and therefore, in many respects, as imperfect as Catholicism. Religion, thinks Palacký, can and ought to be only subjective. As soon as it becomes objective and offensive it becomes only a medium for the attainment of ulterior objects. Like Kant, as well as Hus and Chelčický, Palacký lays stress on the moral side of religion—not on the dogmatic aspect. That is why, concretely speaking, Palacký preferred the Church of the Bohemian Brethren to any other Christian creed known to him. In this sense also the religious idea of Christian brotherhood becomes for Palacký synonymous with the humanitarian idea. Like Kollár, Palacký insists that "a full knowledge of the supreme idea of humanity" is the acme of human wisdom, and that "the highest and

most sacred duty of a man is to be human." Under humanity Palacký further meant also the liberty, equality, and fraternity of all nations "without regard to their political power or size." But while to Kollár and his colleagues this idea was an abstract shibboleth, to Palacký, who justly appreciated the importance of political and State organization, it became a living political programme. The idea of Austro-Slavism as expressed in 1848 and again in 1865 (the "Idea of the Austrian State"), meaning a federation of equal nations as an ideal political organization and the only *raison d'être* for the Austrian State, was indeed nothing but a practical expression of this humanitarian idea. Palacký considered that the Czechs, like all the Slavs, are deeply religious by nature, more peaceful than their neighbours, and therefore humanitarian. The Bohemian Brotherhood was to him the acme of Bohemian history. In this religious interpretation of Bohemian history the Czech humanitarian idealists resemble most the preachers of Polish Messianism and of Russian pan-Slavism. Palacký defines Bohemian history as "a constant struggle between the Slav and the German world." Whenever the Czechs succumbed it was through lack of spiritual activity and moral courage, whenever they triumphed it was through moral superiority. The connection between past Bohemian history and Czech regeneration seems clear to Palacký: "And if with good conscience and with full right we may now claim our place among nations, it is not due to our numbers or our physical resources, but to the spiritual power and moral courage of our predecessors in national reawakening. . . . Only then shall we secure our future, if we triumph spiritually in the agelong struggle to which Fate has destined us." The way towards this end Palacký saw in education and in literary and artistic pursuits. A few months before his death Palacký wrote: "My last word is a sincere wish that my countrymen may never cease to be faithful to themselves, to truth, and to justice. It is now only necessary for us to be better educated and to act according to our best intelligence. That is the only bequest I would on my deathbed make to my nation."

The *humanitarian philosophy* of Palacký and Masaryk,

which is so characteristic of the whole Czech political struggle in its rejection of armed revolution and other militant methods, must not be confused with Tolstoy's non-resistance to evil—a doctrine which has done so much to demoralize the Russian educated classes into indifference to the evils of the Russian Government. History proves that the Czechs are not a militaristic or imperialistic people, and in their struggle for emancipation from Austrian rule they never took recourse to revolution, which, under the existing conditions, was doomed to failure. On the other hand, they did not hesitate to wage regular warfare on Austria during the Great War and to shed their blood for the common cause of freedom. Palacký himself proclaimed the “need of an active struggle of light against darkness, of right against violence, of noble-mindedness against bestiality.” The falsehood of pacifism at all costs has been well defined by Masaryk during the war (*Československá Samostatnost*, July 25, 1917): “When I came to Russia for the first time in 1887 in order to visit Tolstoy, I had long arguments with him on the question of war. A year later I again went to see him, and again the subject of our conversation was the question of war and of non-resistance to evil. Once more I was in Jasnaja Poljana shortly before his death, and again we spoke about the same subject. I am from the bottom of my soul for the humanitarian foundations of morality, and, a pacifist, my work aims at the securing of a permanent peace, and never did I promote hatred on nationalistic or other grounds. I am firmly convinced that Europe and humanity are striving for a peaceful organization uniting all, and that it is the duty of every individual and of every nation to support and to strengthen by all means such organization which would unite all. And yet I do not agree with Tolstoy. I cannot agree to his theory about war and to his teaching about non-resistance to evil. . . . First of all, as regards war, it is not the greatest evil, although it is an evil. An open fight on a battlefield is not worse than a permanent condition of a nation or society which enables the oppression of the weak by the strong. Worse than war is lying and hypocrisy, egoism under the mask of humanity and charity, cowardice

pretending to be courage, false sophistry designed to deceive the sensitive and the generous. Death is not worse than a dishonourable life, which corrupts the soul of one's own self and one's neighbour. . . . But there is no doubt that the present system of militarism is an evil, especially such a militarism as Prussia produced. Prussian militarism is organized conquest, it is the chief and guiding function of a robber State. Against such a militarism it is necessary to fight. Pacifism at all cost is an unnatural, false effort. Democracy does not exclude resistance. The pacifist argument that Western Europe accepted Prussian militarism in introducing conscription is wrong. In the West the army is more like the national militia, which even the anti-militarist Marx and Engels advocated. Radical pacifism and Tolstoy's theory of non-resistance are wrong. There is both a psychological and a moral difference between offensive violence and defence. The morality or immorality of an act is judged according to its motive. There is a great difference between an offensive and a defensive war. Tolstoy's teaching leads to quietism, which allows every bully to perpetrate violence. Such a pacifism, even if it appeals to humanitarianism, is really inhuman."

The similarity which we thus find between the sound humanitarian outlook of Palacký and Masaryk is also clear in the realistic comprehension of the Slav question by both these Czech thinkers. Palacký, and still more Havlíček, were free from any false illusions in regard to Slav reciprocity or in regard to Russia under which the previous generation lived. Palacký declared that "if we ceased to be Czech it would not matter much whether we became German, Italian, Magyar, or Russian." Havlíček, an enemy of all empty talk of pan-Slav patriotism, expressed the same idea when he said that he was proud to call himself Czech but not Slav—not so because he would be ashamed to call himself Slav, but because he considered pan-Slavism to be an ideal which cannot therefore serve already now as a basis in practical life. If we want to be good Slavs we must above all look after ourselves. The Slavs as a race will only then prosper when every Slav branch, the Czechoslovaks, Jugoslavs, Poles, and Russians, will rise and compete

in friendly co-operation. As to Palacký's attitude to Russia, it is clear that he did not lack in sympathies for the Russian people, but was afraid of the real or supposed danger of pan-Russism, and wished therefore to transform Austria into a bulwark both against pan-Germany and against pan-Russia. His attitude towards Russia became later modified. The abolishment of serfdom in 1865 inspired him with a hope that, "ere a generation would pass, the Russian nation, hitherto passive, would step forward as an active force on to the world stage in the sense of old Slav democracy." Simultaneously he foresaw the danger of the coming Dualism, against which he uttered his last, yet significant and in many respects prophetic warning :—

The day of the proclamation of Dualism will necessarily be the birthday of pan-Slavism in its most undesirable form, and the god-parents of the former will thus become the parents of the latter. What will follow is clear. We Slavs will with regret, but without fear look forward to it. We have been before Austria existed and we shall also be when she no longer exists.

Austria did not obey his warning, and Dualism was established in 1866. Palacký could only declare :—

I myself now give up all hope of a long preservation of the Austrian Empire, not because it was not desirable or had no mission to fulfil, but because it has allowed the Germans and the Magyars to grasp the reins of government and to found on it their racial tyranny.

Exasperated by the said measure, the Czechs, headed by Palacký, went to Moscow. On his return Palacký made his point still clearer :—

I have already said that I do not cherish any hopes of the preservation of Austria, especially since the Germans and Magyars had made it the home of their racial despotism. The question, therefore, as to what will happen to the Slavs hitherto living in Austria is not without significance. Without attempting to prophesy future events, which for a mortal man it is difficult to do, I may say from my inner conviction that the Czechs as a nation, if they fell under the subjection of either Prussia or Russia, would never rest contented. It would never fade from their memories that according to right and justice they should rule themselves—that is, they should be ruled by their own government and by their own sovereign. They would regard the Prussians as their

deadly enemies on account of their Germanizing rage. But as to Russians, the Czechs regard them as their racial brothers and friends. They would not become their faithful subjects, but their faithful allies, and, if need be, their vanguards in Europe.

At this time Palacký still considered the establishment of "a universal Russian monarchy" an "unspeakable evil" and a misfortune, but he was no more afraid that it would take place, his fears now being chiefly directed against the reality of Dualism.

Havlíček knew yet more intimately both Russia and Poland, having lived there for some time. It is there that he became so early in his life disillusioned from his dreams about Slav reciprocity, having become closely acquainted both with the good and the bad sides of the Russian and Polish characters, as he shows in his *Pictures from Russia*. In 1848 Havlíček blamed Russia for her intervention in Hungary, and he was under no illusion about Russian absolutism. And yet so bitter were his feelings against the stupid cruelty of Bach's reactionary regime that he declared that "if he chose to live under an absolutistic rule he would prefer Russian to Austrian absolutism."

The personality of Havlíček, undoubtedly a typical representative of Bohemian political thought, is of particular interest. In him we find the foremost spokesman of the Realist reaction against the former Romantic period. Havlíček was a rationalist, and his horror of sentimentality often bordered on callousness, as is illustrated by a letter which he wrote to his future wife shortly before marriage in 1848: "However I love you, I have enough cool reason and firmness to resist your unfounded and biased prejudices, even were I to cause bitterness thereby to you and myself, because the principles on which are founded my ways of thinking, my world outlook, and my convictions are too deeply rooted and have been too well considered to be sacrificed to the childish whims of a girl." As an advocate of firm principles in life as well as in politics he made "reason and honesty" his supreme moral criterion. He recognized only those politics which were "reasonable and honest." Every reasonable and honest man ought, he thought, to be a Democrat and a Liberal, and nobody could

be a true Democrat without being honest and reasonable. Like Komenský, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Lessing, he saw the only hope for human progress in education, and, being a Realist, he translated his idea into practical demands for educational reforms.

The quality which, above all, characterized his intellect was his intense sense of humour, which did not desert him even when he was confined in prison, where he wrote his excellent satire, *The Tyrol Elegy*. Satire and parody predominate not only in his poetry, but also in his numerous political articles, and his subtle humour often reminds the reader of Gogol or Rabelais. Dr. Chalupný, in his monograph on Havlíček, shows that Havlíček's humour was somewhat influenced by the sermons of the notorious German monk, Abraham a Santa-Clara, who, in the sixteenth century, preached in a somewhat vulgar, yet very witty manner against the hierarchy. The influence appears most in Havlíček's parody on the Baptism of St. Vladimir. Yet there is no doubt that with Havlíček humour was a born talent. It lacks the haughty, aristocratic attitude of so many satire-writers; it is intensely human, directed only against the powerful and sympathizing with the oppressed, and it draws its chief inspiration from popular humour. For this reason it is sincere and frank to the point of vulgarity, even as the humour of Chaucer, Swift, Shakespeare, and Voltaire. His epigrams were mostly directed against the Austrian rule or against the hierarchy: "Since the priest makes bread and wine into body and blood for the peasant, the peasant has but to make with his body and blood the wine and the bread for the priest. After sound reflections the Catholic Church invented the mitre for the Pope—having little in his head, he must have much to put on it. As long as the Czechs were possessed by heresy they enjoyed heaven on earth and hell after death, but as soon as they were delivered from it by Ferdinand II they suffered hell on earth and heaven after death. The Russian Czars always allowed their nobles to have as many 'souls' (peasant slaves) as they liked, but they were not allowed to possess any brains. On being asked where Bohemia lies, you would, of course, reply: 'In Europe.' But you are

wrong : she no more lies, she has woken up and is standing no her feet again."

There is something stimulating in his outspoken outcry for greater frankness and less false outward appearances and respectability : " I have an instinct against all too polite people and feel at home only among the rude and the vulgar. Politeness may always be acquired, but one has to be born a churl, and he who would like only to seem vulgar would soon be found out. After all, the meaning of the words ' rude ' and ' polite ' is only relative, because people who usually are considered polite are really often very rude in their hearts. Politeness is only an outward form for them, while their spirit remains mean and rude, but the world usually judges only after appearances. On the other hand, a man who appears rude and vulgar may really be fine and noble-spirited, because rudeness is only an outer cover which hides inner politeness. It is a weapon lent by Nature to good people lest the world should abuse their kindness."

If there is nothing haughty or egoistic in Havlíček's humour, there is also nothing false or disdainful in his attitude towards religion, such as characterized the aristocratic rationalism of the eighteenth century, which considered religion useful only as a means of keeping the lower classes in order. Havlíček was a Liberal, and a bitter critic of clericalism which makes use of religion for political ends, of hierarchy and of all that is false in the Catholic Church. But his sense of realities prevented him from underestimating religion as a moral factor, and he could hardly be called atheist or agnostic, considering his earnest interest in religious questions. It is striking that the Czech regenerators from Dobrovský to Masaryk were either Protestant- or Liberal-minded, and though we would not go so far as to say that the Czech national reawakening had also a religious character, we cannot ignore the fact that the religious questions, the questions " Religion or no religion ? " and " If religion, which religion ? " occupied the minds of Czech intellectuals more than those of other countries. The explanation for it must be sought in Bohemian history and in the influence which rationalism exercised on the Czech

movement. Havlíček was brought up a Catholic, but as a rationalist his attitude towards the Church was anything but orthodox. And yet his rationalism was not intolerantly exclusive, but purely realistic and reasonable. His *Epistles of Kutná Hora*, being essays on the importance of true religion and on the relations which should exist between the State and the Church, give ample proof of this. An interesting article on "Reforms in the Church" appeared also from his pen in the *Národní Noviny* in 1849. After showing how Bohemia was by force converted to Catholicism, Havlíček makes the interesting statement that since Joseph II up to 1848 it was by no means an easy thing to leave the Catholic Church in Austria. Only in 1848 did people in Bohemia really go over in greater numbers to Protestantism. Havlíček did not, however, favour much this new religious revolution, since he saw in religious discord a national danger, and therefore, for the sake of the prestige of the Catholic Church itself and for the sake of the nation, he advocated certain reforms, such as the adoption of the national tongue in the Church instead of Latin, the abolishment of celibacy, free election of priests and bishops, revision of the financial organization of the Church, which in Austria possessed huge landed and other property, etc. But it seems that at the same time he must have been aware that the Pope would never consent to these reforms: "We know that our words are those of a voice crying in the wilderness. Those of the clergy who have an understanding for such reforms have no power to introduce them, and the hierarchy who have the power will not give their consent, thereby only estranging the people to the detriment of the Catholic Church. The end of it seems clear to us: half of our people will turn Protestant and our country will again suffer from religious discords. . . . Unity in religion is a great blessing for a nation, and experience teaches that discords in religion sap also the political vitality of nations. *Dixi et salvavi animam.*" How far-seeing Havlíček was may be seen from the fact that since the definite refusal of the Pope to concede the above-mentioned reforms in 1919 a part of the Czech clergy has, after being excommunicated for insubordination, founded the Czechoslovak Church,

which already numbers hundreds of thousands of adherents,¹ while the number of Protestants (Bohemian Brethren) has also increased. To us the great perspicacity of Havlíček, himself a free-thinker, lies first in his just appreciation of true religion as a conservative, moral factor and a living force with the masses. Secondly, Havlíček, without being prejudiced against Catholicism, realized that the Catholic faith in its present form cannot satisfy the essentially contemplative and truly religious Czech spirit, which likes to penetrate to the very bottom of moral truth and does not rest on outward formalities and appearances. After all, Palacký has amply proved through his history that Catholicism never really suited the Czech spirit.

Thus the apparent harshness of Havlíček's rationalism appears strangely tempered by his keen common sense and the warm heart of a true Slav. That Havlíček was really aware of his Slav character and temperament, and that he had deep sympathies with the Russians and other Slavs despite his protestations that he wanted foremost to be a good Czech, appears clear to everybody who reads his *Pictures from Russia*. We even begin to doubt whether it is the same Havlíček who relied on his reason alone, when we read his exaltations over the vastness and originality of Russia, his criticism of the Western civilization which is spoiling Russia, and indeed the whole of humanity, by devoting all care to the enlightenment of heads, not of hearts, and his praise for the special gift of the Russian people in knowing how to enjoy their leisure without spoiling it with unnecessary care for the future. He also praises the democratic spirit and frankness of relations between master and servant in Russia, and admires the warm kindness and sincerity of family life: "The factory spirit and speculation seem to devour all our sense of beauty, childish innocence, and warm familiarity of former times. . . . Everything, even our pleasures, seems imbued with the factory spirit of mechanism. Only in the East, in Russia and in Poland, may beautiful, hearty familiarity still be found." How strangely familiar seem these words to us to-day who listen to a similar verdict of the great wise man of the East, Sir

¹ See p. 185.

Rabindranath Tagore, who in his *Nationalism* (1917) deplores that "the moral man, the complete man, is more and more giving way, almost without knowing it, to make room for the political and the commercial man. . . . In the West the national machinery of commerce and politics turns out neatly compressed bales of humanity which have their use and high market value, but they are bound in iron hoops, labelled and separated off with scientific care and precision. Obviously God made man to be human, but this modern product has such marvellous square-cut finish, savouring of gigantic manufacture, that the Creator will find it difficult to recognize it as a thing of spirit and a creature made in His own divine image. . . . Scientific organizations, vastly spreading in all directions, are strengthening our power, but not our humanity."

CHAPTER XII

SEVENTY YEARS OF STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

THE establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic in October 1918 came, no doubt, to many people in Western Europe as a surprise. The world knew, indeed, very little about the previous seventy years of political struggle which the Czechs had led against the encroachments of pan-Germanism. The events of the Great War were, of course, hard to foresee, and yet to any close observer it must have been clear that the Czechs grew every year in spiritual and material strength, and would one day claim their place among European nations. No fatalism was required to believe in the regeneration of Bohemia, except a faith in eternal justice and right, and in the ultimate success of persistent work and idealistic effort aided by favourable natural conditions and native genius.

The rebirth of Bohemia as a nation has been called the romance of Europe. It was romance, indeed, if there is romance in the practical idealism with which the Czechs consciously worked on their liberation for almost a century. The romance is also in the fact that the struggle was not confined to the political arena only. Since the Czechs did not believe in revolutionary methods, their policy was always confined to such means as were left to them by the limited Austrian Constitution, and consisted not only in a struggle for national rights—schools, language equality in public life, etc.—but also in a struggle for more democracy. It would be only too easy to find faults in the Czech policy, explained in a great measure through lack of parliamentary experience and political tradition ; but the success of the Czechs lay not so much in politics as in spiritual and economic progress. Better education stood always in the forefront

of Czech efforts. Czech science received its due and its opportunity for further development in the establishment of a separate Czech University in Prague in 1882. Art and literature were no more poor efforts at imitation of those of other countries, but acquired excellence and originality of form and contents.—In music the natural Slav artistic talent became perhaps best pronounced, and the Czechs gave the world such famous composers as Smetana, Dvořák, and Suk, whose greatness and originality of conception placed Bohemia in the forefront among musical nations. In this connection we may also mention that the establishment of the National Theatre in Prague in 1881, built from voluntary contributions, meant a national event, the importance of which can hardly be realized outside the frontiers of Bohemia. In economic respects great progress has been made by the Czechs, especially during the past thirty years, in emancipating and strengthening their commerce, banking, and industries. The Sokol gymnastic movement did a great deal to raise the self-confidence of the Czechs. Czech philosophers, among whom we may mention A. Smetana, Masaryk, Krejčí, and Drtina, have shown that in clearness and depth of thought the Czechs are, as indeed also in other respects, not the last among the Slavs. Thus every year Bohemia has been steadily making progress in building up an independent culture of her own, and preparing herself for the hour when she could once more take her share of responsibility as a member of the European family of nations. It is our firm belief that, though the Slovaks might have finally succumbed if left at the mercy of the Magyars, the Czechs would have, even without the Great War, succeeded in the normal course of events in gaining a large measure of autonomy and independence as a nation.

It is impossible to deal fully with the manifold aspects of modern Czech national life. Some we will attempt to describe in the second part of this book, and for the present we will content ourselves with an outline of the constitutional struggle of the Czechs up to the Great War.

The Austrian Constitution of 1849 was abolished in 1851 and was really never carried out. After the failure of

Bach's absolutism a new "lasting and irrevocable" Constitution was granted by the so-called October Diploma in 1860. The Emperor promised to govern in future only through the legislative organs of the land diets and of the Central Parliament. The latter was composed of representatives of the land diets. This Constitution satisfied neither the Germans nor the Magyars. The former feared that their privileged position was menaced, the latter demanded even greater autonomy. In view of the international situation Austria still hoped to play a leading part in a Great Germany. Goluchowski was dismissed and was succeeded by Schmerling, the "irrevocable" October Constitution was revoked, and a new Constitution was imposed in February 1861. This strengthened the competence of the Central Parliament at the expense of the land diets, and, although Hungary really gained by it, the Magyars resisted it strongly and with much greater success than the Czechs. The Czechs contented themselves with the Emperor Francis Joseph's word of honour, given in April 1861, that he would be crowned as King of Bohemia—a promise repeatedly given but never kept. Schmerling was at last overthrown by the opposition of the Magyars, who worked steadily for the establishment of dualism. After a short regime of Count Belcredi, Beust was called in order to appease the Magyars. The Slavs were in a hopeless minority in the new parliament, because in the diets which elected the delegates to the Central Parliament the Germans were through an unjust electoral system assured the majority. The Czechs abstained, in fact, since 1863 from attending the Parliament and were deprived of their mandates. The Constitution was suspended in 1865. Francis Joseph, being in difficulties, now again promised to be crowned Bohemia's king and to respect her rights, but it was clear to everybody that dualism was on the point of establishment. In vain did Palacký utter his prophetic warning, in vain also did Rieger declare that "those who direct Austria's destinies ought to remember that institutions based on injustice and violence have no duration." Even the Bohemian Diet passed in 1866 a resolution against dualism, pointing out that Bohemia had the same historic claim to

independence as Hungary. The Germans and the Magyars showed a much greater shrewdness than the Slavs in profiting from the opportunity which offered itself at the psychological moment after the defeat at Sadová. The Slavs, it seems, not only failed to see through Bismarck's game, but they even thought that Austria, having ceased to be the head of the German Confederation, would at last become that confederation of equal nations which they always dreamt of. Hoping the Czech programme would at last triumph, Rieger wrote, in agreement with the Poles, a memorandum demanding the restitution and extension of the October Constitution. But the appointment of Beust as Foreign Minister in the autumn of 1866 brought the first disappointment of these hopes. The Magyars, always Prussia's faithful friends and allies, exerted, through Julius Andrassy and Francis Déak, their influence in favour of the establishment of dualism, which was not only to give the Magyars almost complete autonomy, but also to strengthen their hegemony over the Slovaks, Rumanians, and Jugoslavs, while at the same time securing the ascendancy of the Germans in Austria. By sparing Austria territorially and by means of dualism, Germany, indeed, gained in the Habsburg Empire more than a faithful ally. Instead of becoming a bulwark against pan-Germany and a guardian of peace, as even during the war many Allied politicians deluded themselves that she could become, Austria, in fact, since the establishment of dualism was fatally destined to become Prussia's willing accomplice in the pan-German plot, her vanguard and her "bridge to the East." The occupation of Bosnia in 1878 and its later annexation, and the conclusion of the Triple Alliance, were only links in the chain of pan-German policy.

From a historical point of view it is interesting that Prussia counted, during her invasion of Bohemia in 1866, on the good will of the population, and wishing to gain them over to her side, committed herself to a proclamation recognizing Bohemia's rights to independence. This proclamation was probably drafted by the Czech Radical, Frič, who fled abroad after the abortive revolt of 1848. During the Prussian invasion Frič exerted his influence with the Czech leaders in

order to persuade them to proclaim Bohemia an independent kingdom with the youngest son of the Italian king, Victor Emanuel, on the throne. Even during the peace negotiations between Prussia and Austria Frič conducted an active propaganda against the Habsburgs and against Austria. In a printed proclamation distributed broadcast in Bohemia he declared that "a federation without the freedom and independence of all nations who form part of it is an empty dream. Let him who desires a federation work for the independence of his own nation first. . . . We do not want Austria, because we realize that she not only does no good to us, but directly threatens our very existence. We are able to, and want to, maintain an independent State existence without Austria." To speculate how far his plans were realizable at the time seems fruitless to-day. Suffice it to say that, although the population in general was always anti-Austrian, Bohemia as a whole was neither then nor previously in 1848 ripe for an armed revolution or for the proclamation of independence—to say nothing of the fact that the Czech leaders themselves lacked correct orientation and still cherished hopes in a regenerated Austria.

The December Constitution of 1867, through which dualism was finally established, exasperated the Czechs. Bohemia, whose rights as a separate State have on so many occasions been solemnly recognized by the Habsburgs, had now been included as a mere member in "the kingdoms and lands represented in the Reichsrath," and Hungary alone received special treatment. The Czech orientation towards Russia received a practical expression in a journey of the leaders to Moscow. The Czechs abstained now not only from the Reichsrath (this passive resistance lasted till 1879), but also from the Diet. The leading idea of Rieger's programme, the idea of the historical right of Bohemia to independence, was emphasized in his memorandum to Napoleon III, in which were outlined the legal rights of the Bohemian Diet to levy taxes and to recruit armies. On Rieger's initiative also Kalousek wrote his monumental work on "The Bohemian State Right." But Napoleon III was little interested in the fate of Bohemia. Being a friend of Beust, Napoleon did not care how Austria was organized

or who governed her. In despair Rieger wrote in 1867 that he feared lest France should learn better at her own expense Rieger's interest in foreign politics and his relations with Petrograd, Belgrade, and Paris displeased not a little the Austrian Government. In 1887 the Minister Pražák wrote to him from Vienna that the Government was very angry because the Czechs were against the Triple Alliance and because "altogether they ought to be quiet where foreign affairs are concerned."

Czech opposition to the December Constitution was to be broken by force. Military rule was introduced in Bohemia with all the odious persecutions incumbent on it. Meanwhile the international horizon became obscured again by the imminent Franco-Prussian conflict. Francis Joseph was again in need of the services of his "beloved nations." In February 1871 Hohenwart was appointed to appease the Czechs, who, as usual, received many promises which were never to be fulfilled. In September 1871 the Emperor again "recognized the rights of the Bohemian kingdom" and declared ready "to acknowledge this recognition by a coronation oath." The Czechs formed a Committee in which Clam-Martinic participated and which formulated the so-called "fundamental articles." These embodied the Czech demands—minimal demands the Young Czech *Národní Listy* called them—that the October Diploma, modified in favour of greater land autonomy, should be introduced at least for Austria, and that the Bohemian Diet should elect direct deputies to the delegations. Meanwhile the situation cleared up, and Vienna yielded once more to the pressure of Berlin and Budapest and decided against the Slavs.

Obedying William I and Andrassy, the Emperor rejected the Czech demands. Repression and military rule were once more introduced in Bohemia. In 1873 the Constitution was changed in so far as members to the Reichsrath were elected henceforward directly and not through the Diets. This was meant to strengthen further the unity of Austria, since even by this reform a German majority in the Reichsrath was assured. In 1896 Badeni made an attempt at enfranchising the masses; but general and equal suffrage was not introduced in Austria until 1907, and even then the

Constitution remained far from being democratic. The Crown preserved considerable prerogatives, and in case of emergency the Government could govern and enact laws without Parliament. During the first three years of the war, for instance, Parliament never met in Austria, and the Government passed 161 laws on its own responsibility. The electoral system itself was not as democratic as might at first sight appear. Instead of 310 seats out of 516 in the Reichsrath, to which the Slavs were entitled on the basis of their numbers, they held only 259. Altogether the whole modern Austrian policy tended towards preserving the German predominance and towards centralization. It was, therefore, directed especially against the last remnants of the Bohemian Constitution. The continuous German obstruction effectively prevented the sitting of the Bohemian Diet, and this gave the Government a good pretext for substituting it by a Government Commission in 1913.

No nation perhaps was so directly menaced by the pan-German plans as the Czechoslovaks. Only during the Great War did it become obvious to everybody, save the politically blind, how thoroughly Prussia succeeded, with the aid of Hungary, in peacefully subjugating Austria. Happily the literature on pan-Germanism is now great enough both in French and in English to require any further proof of the existence and seriousness of this menace which the Great War brought home to everybody. The Czechoslovaks, being surrounded almost on all sides by the Germans, would have been the first to succumb, the more so as Prussia found always her true allies in the Magyars. Kossuth in 1848 declared that "the Magyar nation is bound to maintain the most cordial relations with the free German nation," and Frederick List in 1862 dreamt of a "powerful Oriental German-Magyar Empire." In practice the Magyars gave an expression to this policy through the part they played in the establishment of dualism and in the conclusion of the Austro-German alliance. These two most important contributions towards pan-German Central Europe made Bismarck utter words of gratitude to the Magyars and declare that "German and Magyar interests are inseparable."

Among the instigators of the Great War Count Tisza was not the least. That the Czechs were aware of the pan-German danger will be clearly seen from the opinions of the two great Czech politicians versed in foreign politics, Kramář and Masaryk, whom we quote later.

If in the last chapter we dealt at some length with the personality of Palacký and of Havlíček we now have to emphasize in the same way the rôle played by Thomas **Masaryk**, the first President of the Czechoslovak Republic, in the last stage of the Czech regeneration. Born in 1850, Masaryk soon gained a far-reaching influence on the spiritual life of Bohemia. He became Professor at the new Czech University in 1882, and he remains till the present day the most fascinating personality which modern Bohemia produced. His manifold influence as teacher and philosopher was almost equally great among the Czechoslovaks as among the other Slavs, especially the Yugoslavs. Some insight into Masaryk's political views may be obtained from his works *The Czech Question*, *Our Crisis*, *Havlíček*, and *John Hus* (essays on Czech history and regeneration), in which he consciously sought to follow up the philosophy of Palacký and Havlíček. In his *Social Question* he gave his critical view of Socialism, with which he had many sympathies in theory, but the solution of which he sought in a moral regeneration of the world, rejecting the theory of historic materialism. Nevertheless, he hoped that, although Jesus said that there always would be poor people, Socialism would root out poverty. He also asked for more sympathy from the middle classes for the just claims of the workers: "It is easy to sing and preach about the Fatherland, but in concrete what does a poor man find in his home, which is his country? What does he care about the Czech Fatherland if in his unsatisfactory home his children perish morally and physically? To such a man we must not talk in phrases of patriotism. Improve his home and he will have a different outlook. He will feel differently his patriotism than if he has to suffer from poverty through no fault of his own."

There is hardly another man in Europe who could boast of being such a good European as Masaryk, who is thoroughly versed not only in Slav languages, philosophy, and literature,

as he has shown in his great work on Russia, but also in French, English, and German modern thought. It was he who stimulated interest in foreign literature in Bohemia, and it was his wide outlook, as well as his close contact with the Yugoslavs, which enabled him to foresee the danger of the coming war. In his uncompromising insistence on truth in science and politics, in his call for a deeper religious life, in his emphasis that although political independence was the ultimate end of the Czech regeneration it alone would not save his nation without higher morality and better education, and finally, in his call for a higher, more humanitarian, and truthful conception of patriotism—in all this Masaryk may truly be called the descendant of Hus, Komenský, Dobrovský, Palacký, and Havlíček.

Masaryk's advent to Prague from the Viennese University coincided with a peculiar inertia, if not decay, in Czech political ranks. Indeed, after Palacký and Havlíček there was no great national leader and no serious attempt at a revision of the Czech political programme. Politics resolved themselves into a rather one-sided Liberalism and Radical Nationalism, which contrasted unfavourably with former idealism and humanitarianism. The subtle differences which existed between Palacký and Havlíček had meanwhile developed into open differences between the Old Czechs and the Young Czechs, but these differences concerned rather the tactics than the programme. They became manifest already in 1863 during the debates about electoral reform. In 1878 Rieger and Sladkovský formulated together a common State Right programme, but when in 1879 Count Taaffe succeeded in inducing the Czechs to abandon the barren policy of passive resistance in return for a separate Czech University and certain administrative concessions, the schism was bound to assume the form of a definite secession of the Young Czechs, which took place in 1887. The policy of Rieger, who led the Old Czechs and joined the Government majority, ended with a complete and definite defeat of his party in the elections of 1891.

The causes of the downfall of the Old Czechs are not far to seek. In the first place their alliance with the nobility concluded between Rieger and Clam-Martinic in 1865

became more and more obnoxious to the people. It was more and more becoming obvious that especially the younger generation of the nobility lacked in sympathies for the national cause and was getting under the sway of clericalism. The orthodox Catholics became divided: some of them, especially among the lower clergy, continued in the idealistic belief in a reformation of the Catholic Church, and shared the tolerant and liberal outlook of the early Czech priest-regenerators; others, who were in the majority, were backed by the Austrian State, the official Church, and the hierarchy, as well as by the nobility, and were resolved, in a mistaken belief of thereby protecting the Catholic religion, on rooting out the "heretic" doctrines of Palacký, who through his work justified the Czech Reformation and gave a true conception of Bohemian history. It was their clerical and conservative leanings which prepared the Old Czechs' doom. The direct cause was an unfortunate agreement entered into with the Germans, called the "Punctations."

But the Young Czech Party itself was internally weak. Opposition in its own ranks in favour of a more decided policy in a few years brought about the separation of at least three new political parties: the Realist, the Progressive, and the National Socialist Parties. If we consider that the first years of the twentieth century brought about also a rapid development of the Labour movement and, further, that the farmers constituted another party of their own, the political position of the bourgeois classes was considerably weakened. Happily in times of stress, especially during the Great War and even after the War, the Czech political parties always found sufficient common national interests to bring them into close co-operation.

Czech party politics before the war were too complicated and are of too small an interest to the outside world to be reviewed in greater detail. Masaryk returned from the Reichsrath in 1893 owing to his dissatisfaction with the Young Czech Party, and in 1900 he founded a party of his own, but it never gained any great hold on the masses owing to its too critical and academic character. The Nationalist workers formed the National Socialist Party

in 1898, which was opposed to the Social Democrats and which prospered fairly well, especially during the war. It suffered, however, from too violent, empty nationalistic Radicalism and from a lack of a consequent programme. During the war it swayed more and more to the Left, and finally accepted orthodox Socialism. The Social Democrats who formed their party as early as 1878 had for a long time little to say under the existing undemocratic electoral conditions in Austria, but thanks to their able Press and persistent propaganda, as well as thanks to the growing industrialization and the progress of Democracy, they gained in importance rapidly. Their chief strength has been the definite character of their programme and the way in which it appealed to the class interests of the workers. Their weak point has been inner differences on the question of nationality and the divergence of views between the Radical and the moderate leaders, much as among the Socialists in other countries. It was only in April 1921 that the Left Wing split and formed a Communist Party under the influence of Moscow. The greatest party numerically, though not the most important, since its programme was limited to purely class interests, was, up to the rise of the Czechoslovak Republic the Agrarian Party, who secured 28 seats out of 108 Czech mandates in the Reichsrath in 1907 and 40 in 1911, at the expense of the Young Czech and the Clerical Parties. The Social Democrats gained 27 and 25 seats in 1907 and 1911. The leading Nationalist Party remained the Young Czech Party.

Under the existing conditions in Czech party politics Masaryk had a hard struggle to fight as a staunch protagonist of truth. In the first place he had to stand up against empty or false patriotism, which in Bohemia took the form of exaggerated historicism. The importance of past history is naturally always more keenly realized by oppressed nations, and Palacký can hardly be blamed for the excessive way in which Bohemian history was subsequently abused by would-be patriots. False historic romanticism took the form of undue emphasis of the most remote periods. Prompted by the examples of Macpherson and Chatterton in England, some romantic disciples of Dobrovský, probably

Hanka, Linda, and Svoboda, resolved on the forgery of old Czech manuscripts, presumably from the ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth centuries. Some of these manuscripts were soon recognized as forgeries by Dobrovský himself, but about others, notably about the manuscript of Kralové Dvůr, there existed for a long time a doubt as to whether they were genuine or not. It was chiefly the eminent Czech grammarian Gebauer and his friend Masaryk who finally established that all the manuscripts were forgeries. The opponents of the manuscripts, who valued national honour and scientific truth more than the glory of a great past built on forgeries, had to suffer great effronteries on this account from the would-be patriots, lead by the Liberal-Nationalist organ, the *Národní Listy*. For Masaryk the question was foremost a moral question, on the solution of which depended the whole world outlook of his nation. Masaryk stood against this false historicism because he held that greatness should be sought rather in the present than in the past, because a nation with a great past but a small present had but a small future. Furthermore, he maintained that history should be looked upon in a realistic spirit, and not in a mistaken romantic mood which ignored the real greatness of the past.

Masaryk's realism is not that of Dostoievský, Zola, Ibsen, or Nietzsche. His realism has nothing materialistic in it, although it is founded on noetics and on rationalism, because it always remains sound in its practical idealism. His realism took the form of an effort for greater truth and deeper morality in life. It is founded on a profound religious and philosophic belief that the world and mankind are ruled by certain principles and laws of absolute truth. The man is the living expression of these principles of God or Providence, and has therefore to live up to these laws *sub specie æternitatis*. All nations and individuals have an equal right to freedom. Eternal morality applies to every phase of social life.

Locally, Bohemian realism stood for nationalization of science and philosophy, for better education, intellectual, moral, artistic, and political, and for a realistic outlook on life through taking things as they really are and not as they

appear to be. Hence realism, to which already Havlíček subscribed, fought mercilessly all shallow patriotism and Liberalism, all fantastic romanticism and historicism. Nevertheless, realism did not reject historicism altogether, but only subordinated it to the realities of the present. It differed from Radicalism chiefly in practice, since its aim was to consider things not by jumping at conclusions but by considering things as they are, in the belief that progress lies in evolution rather than in revolution.

Besides the question of manuscripts, false historicism gave rise also to a movement called *Cyrilo-Methodism*, proclaimed first by Sladkovský, then by Rieger, Gregř, editor of the *Národní Listy*, and others. This movement, which purported to be religious, but in reality was political, wrongly assumed that the Church of Cyril and Methodius was identical with the Eastern Orthodox Church, and that also the Czech Reformation had a direct connection with it. Starting from this presumption, Cyrilo-Methodism, in the spirit of false romanticism, demanded a return of the Czechs, not to the creed of the Bohemian Brethren or of the Hussites, but to the original Cyrilo-Methodic Church through the medium of orthodoxy. We have referred in previous chapters to the facts of the controversy. Historically, the Cyrilo-Methodic Church cannot be considered identical with the Eastern Church, because the schism between the Western and the Eastern Church occurred later, and because Cyril and Methodius recognized the supremacy of Rome. Similarly, there is nothing to show any real connection between the Orthodox Church and the Czech Reformation. "Neither Hus nor the Bohemian Brethren," says Masaryk, "have anything more in common with Orthodoxy than any other Christian creed," i.e. anything real, any dogma, or anything in spirit, for mere negative outer signs cannot be considered real links between religious movements. It is obvious that the Czech Reformation had a far deeper purpose than a mere change of the Church language, and the influence of the Eastern Church on its origin was almost nil.

But there was yet another aspect of the question. Those who proclaimed Cyrilo-Methodism were religiously indifferent Liberals. If the question of a Slav Church language meant

anything to people who really believed, it could certainly not be of any interest to people without any deep religious faith. It is for this reason that Masaryk, as an enemy of all superficiality and hypocrisy, denounced the movement so strongly, and it is for the same reason that the movement was bound to fail. Masaryk had always a deep respect for all sincerely religious people who lived up to the moral principles of their creed, even were they Catholic. But, like Havlíček, he always denounced that misuse of religion for political ends which degrades all true religion and which is commonly called clericalism, and for the same reason he was also opposed to the would-be religious movement of Cyrilo-Methodism. What he laid chief stress on was the spirit of our past history: "The question at stake is not the return to certain forms of our religious reformation, but the pursuance of those ideals of our ancestors which we profess to venerate in words." The chief lesson of Bohemian history was not, according to Masaryk, of a negative nature—a constant national struggle against the Germans, Austrians, and Magyars. Bohemia had also a positive mission in the part she played in the spiritual and religious progress of Europe.

Another aspect of the question of Cyrilo-Methodism is the question as to how far Catholicism or Orthodoxy is suited to the Czech character. Palacký rightly pointed out that the Hussite movement was not at all an Eastern Church movement. He further held that Orthodox ceremonies were not suitable to the Czechs, because their pomp appeals to sentiment only. As a matter of fact, the Orthodox Church is still more conservative than the Catholic Church, and although it may, like the Catholic Church, appeal to Slav imagination, it certainly does not appeal to the contemplative, rational, and educated Czechs. The same applies also to the question whether the Catholic Church could become the national Bohemian Church. Apart from the fact that it has been forced on the people who still remember their history, and notwithstanding the fact that the majority of the Czechs have professed Catholicism for the past three centuries, it seems that Catholicism is not suited to the Czech character, and it will either lose its

position as the strongest Church in Czechoslovakia or else it will occupy the same politically insignificant position as in France. Its present hold is only explained by the deplorable indifferentism of the middle classes, who remain Catholic more through custom than through real faith, and by the low level of education in certain parts of Moravia and Slovakia. Religious indifferentism and superficial Liberalism is surely undesirable in the interests of the moral standards of the nation, and it is only to be hoped that the Czechoslovaks, true to their great past traditions, will once more wake up to the importance of religion for national life, as proclaimed by Masaryk.¹

Like Havlíček, Masaryk stood also against empty Radicalism which was professed by the so-called progressists. The latter consisted at first of students and young workers who called themselves Omladina. They published various reviews, and since 1892 their organ was called *Independence*. The progressists formed the extreme left wing of the Young Czechs, and although they accepted many of the scientific and social views of the realists, they stood against the more critical realist organ, *Čas*. Like the realists the progressists formed a party of their own in 1900. On account of their Radical views the members of the Omladina were suspected of being a secret revolutionary society, and in 1893 sixty-eight of them were arrested and imprisoned for "high treason," including their leaders Dr. Rašín, Sokol, and Hajn.

The reason why Masaryk opposed the progressists was

¹ According to the official census of 1921 there are in Czechoslovakia 10,380,000 Roman Catholics (76.29 per cent.), 990,000 Protestants (7.28 per cent.) 525,000, Czechoslovak Church members (3.9 per cent.), 73,000 Orthodox (0.54 per cent.), 354,000 Jews (2.6 per cent.), and 724,500 without religion (5.32 per cent.). Since 1910 the Catholic Church lost 1,291,000 members, and the number of its adherents fell from 85.89 per cent. to 76.29 per cent. The most striking is the loss suffered by the Catholic Church in Bohemia, where over a million, almost exclusively Czechs, left the Church since 1910, and where the percentage therefore fell from 95.67 per cent. to 78.2 per cent. The Czechoslovak Church, founded after the war by ex-Catholic priests, wavered for some time between Orthodoxy and Protestantism, its only difference from the Catholic Church at first being the abolishment of celibacy and of Latin in Church. It now inclines, however, definitely to Protestantism.

obvious. As a realist he was against all political fantastic romanticism, as a humanitarian he was against revolutionary methods. Masaryk's arguments against Radicalism were summed up in his *Present Crisis*. First of all he raised objection against the superficial way in which the progressists worked out their programme, which was based on philosophical anarchy. The progressists were for collectivism, but also for the State Right (historical right) of Bohemia. And yet even they demanded a personal, dynastic union with Austria. But perhaps the chief difference between him and the Radicals existed on the question of armed revolution. We have dealt with Masaryk's attitude towards the question of non-resistance. This attitude he held already in 1895, when he wrote in the *Czech Question*: "I do not say that we should not resist evil; on the contrary, evil must be resisted always and everywhere, consistently and immediately from the outset. If the so-called good people were not really lazy, there would be no bad people. Every man may once be faced with the necessity of defending himself with iron, not only with work and reason. Even the Czechs would do so if their vital interests were at stake. But meanwhile this is not so. . . . Our nation has even in a limited constitutionalism enough freedom to dispense with militant tactics." It will be seen that Masaryk does not absolutely reject armed resistance in case of dire necessity and self-defence, such as arose for the Allies and for the Czechs during the war. He does not consider such a resistance in self-defence incompatible with humanitarian principles, but under normal pre-war conditions he did not consider it either expedient or necessary that the Czechs should use revolutionary methods. This does not mean, as was brought against him by his opponents, that he admits only relative or conditional humanity. He rejects the "eye for an eye" policy and considers violence against violence only then justified when no other means are reasonably available or effective. In this respect he agrees with Havlíček, who said that "so long as armed defence against apparent offence and unconstitutional violence is not fully justified, defence should be conducted in a lawful manner, peacefully and not through secret conspiracies, revolutionary

violence, poison, and murder." This is a typically Czech rational and common-sense view about political tactics which contrasts favourably with Polish and Irish views on the same subject. It was Mickiewicz who first rebuked the Czechs for being too rational in this regard and "lacking in enthusiasm." Mickiewicz thought that mere hard work and learning would not bring a nation independence. More than on Russia he wished them to rely on Poland. Austria, too, (and here he was right) would disappoint the trust which the Czechs placed in her. Austria to him was a society of some 200 aristocratic families governing through their bureaucracy and their army an Empire, very much like the East India Company. Masaryk on his side does not deny the need for enthusiasm, but he does not think that the Czechs really ever lacked in it. Masaryk is, like Kollár, Palacký, and Havlíček, in favour of reason deciding the means towards the ultimate goal. History has shown that the Czechs were right, for what did the Poles gain through their many revolutions? On the other hand, did Czech rationalism prevent them from forming great voluntary armies on the side of the Allies during the war who fought with lofty idealism and gallantry, and did they not, according to a well-considered plan as well as through spontaneous enthusiasm, finally achieve their independence?

Typical was also Masaryk's attitude to Austria generally, restrained yet reasonable. Masaryk was first elected to the Reichsrath in 1891 as a member of the Young Czech Party, in which he formed with Kaizl and Kramář the realist fraction. From the first Masaryk held that between a foreign government and a grown-up, yet oppressed nation a struggle is inevitable. He criticized sharply the Government for its anti-Slav policy in Bosnia in a speech which caused the German deputy Menger to call him a traitor to Austria. And yet no rebuke could be more unjust to Masaryk, who consciously endorsed Palacký's "Idea of the Austrian State," and regretted only that Palacký later changed his views about the possibility of a further existence of Austria, because he thereby strengthened the phantastic Radicals. By a strange irony of fate Masaryk himself had likewise to change his views in later years, but it must be

admitted that for a long time he sincerely strove for a better Austria in the sense of Palacký's early programme, in which Bohemia was to obtain a large measure of independence within federalistic Austria. Masaryk demanded greater interest in Bohemia for the rest of Austria, and he hoped that Austria would accept the Czech democratic and Slav programme. Real doubts as to Austria's further existence and as to the possibility of her independence from Germany in foreign affairs began to awaken in him first after the Russian revolution in 1905 and then after the annexation of Bosnia in 1908. A sign of the anti-Serbian policy of Austria in which she became the cat's-paw of Germany was also the two high-treason trials against the Jugoslavs, in which Masaryk himself took a prominent part by revealing the forgeries of which the Austrian Government availed themselves in order to compromise the Jugoslavs and to justify their own anti-Slav policy.

A similar change of outlook occurred also in the mind of Dr. Kramář, who suffered a great deal of unpopularity in Bohemia before the war owing to his pro-Austrian opportunism, although through it the Czechs gained many posts in the administration and other advantages. Kramář was, however, also famous as a great Slavophil. He has been instrumental, through the neo-Slav movement, in bringing about a better understanding among the Slavs, notably between the Poles and the Russians. Kramář's political conception in early life was to liberate Austria from the subservience to Germany by securing the Slavs a greater control in the Government and by giving Austria a pro-Russian orientation. But owing to the fatal and perfidious Balkan policy of Aehrenthal, who for a long time, especially during his stay in Petrograd as Austrian Ambassador, pretended to be a friend of Russia and to favour Kramář's policy, Austria drifted more and more into the orbit of pan-Germanism. From the day of the annexation of Bosnia Kramář foresaw the approaching end of Austria and, disillusioned, he wrote in 1911: "I had an aim in life and a leading idea. The events of the annexation crisis have proved calamitous for the policy I have followed all my life. . . . Berlin will henceforward alone

direct Austrian policy." How true also came his words, written in 1906, that "if a conflict should break out between the German and the non-German world, and the fate of Austria should be at stake, the conflict would surely not end with the preservation of Austria"!

The belief that the war, when it did break out, would mean the end of Austria was shared not only by the Czech leaders, but also by such of their eminent friends in England as Mr. Wickham Steed and Mr. Seton-Watson. As everybody knows to-day, this belief came true. It was founded on the knowledge that Austria, bound for good or evil inevitably to Germany, would fall with her not only because her cause was unjust, but also because the majority of her own subjects, the Slavs, Rumanians, and Italians, were opposed to her further existence and sympathized with the Allies. For the Czechoslovaks especially the Great War offered a great opportunity for a final bid for liberty. It meant for them their ultimate ordeal in their struggle for independence and the achievement of their rebirth as a free nation.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CZECHOSLOVAKS AND THE GREAT WAR

IT would be wrong to generalize and to make sweeping charges against nationalism, militarism, or capitalism in Europe as the chief factors conducive to war. Mr. H. G. Wells, in his *Outline of History* (page 527), speaks of nationalism as "a half-true theory that has played and still plays an intensely mischievous part in the world," although on another page (503) he rightly criticizes the Vienna Congress for having failed to substitute the natural (meaning ethnographic) for the "artificial" map. Similarly, Mr. R. B. Mowat concludes his *History of European Diplomacy* (London, 1922) with a pessimistic, not quite unfounded view of the present situation. He deplores the rise of acute nationalism in the second half of the nineteenth century, and thinks that "conditions that make for war are as strong as ever—the passion of nationality, the feeling of revenge, the grievance of irredentism, and the sinister propaganda of international Communists." Nor are these the only charges against nationalism. It is forgotten, however, that the sentiment of national community is a natural sentiment which existed, consciously or unconsciously, long before the nineteenth century. It became acute in the nineteenth century with the progress of general education and democracy, and in consequence of the spiritual forces awakened by the French Revolution. Nationalism becomes dangerous when it serves as pretext for imperialistic schemes, or where it is suppressed through the mastery of one nation over others, as in the case of Turkey and Austria-Hungary, but in itself it does not necessarily lead to strife and warfare. Had the principle of nationality in Europe been vindicated before, the pan-Germans and the Magyars could not have dared on

their war venture. To-day the political prospects do not—despite the gloomy economic situation—seem so bad: peoples and provinces can no longer be treated arbitrarily or bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty, there are no master-nations and slave nations, but all nations are free and the rights of minorities are guaranteed, international law has been substantially strengthened through the League of Nations, democracy is in most European countries on the advance. Evidently also national toleration must be promoted if peaceful co-operation between nations is to become a working ideal. Whatever may have been the chief causes of the Great War, there is no doubt that the unsound conditions in Austria and the Austrian foreign policy must bear their share of responsibility.

For a long time past Germany took advantage of Franco-English and Anglo-Russian rivalry in strengthening her own position. Russia could never forget the ungratefulness of Austria in 1854 for the services rendered her in 1848, but she had no quarrel with Germany. In the tenth chapter we have shown how England's fear of Russia helped Bismarck to strengthen the friendship of Germany with Russia, which was the corner-stone of his policy, the expression of which was his *Rückversicherungvertrag* (defensive alliance). Bismarck's fall, followed by William II's policy of ruthless and offensive expansion, meant a new chapter in German, and indeed in European, policy. Even before Bismarck's fall, however, Russia began to grow suspicious in consequence of Germany's attitude at the Berlin Congress, in view of the conclusion of the Triple Alliance, and in consequence of Austria's imperialistic policy and German peaceful penetration in the Balkans. The result was the conclusion of the Franco-Russian Treaty. Germany's ambitions for the domination of Central Europe and of the Near East (Berlin-Bagdad), her thirst for colonization and for naval supremacy, now became more and more pronounced. Germany openly made a bid not only for the economic, but also for the political supremacy in Central Europe. William's megalomania, his belief in his own divine mission, his declaration that Germany's

future lay on the water, and his speech in Damascus in which he proclaimed himself protector of all Islam—all this quite naturally aroused feelings of enmity, especially in England, who saw herself menaced in her very existence. Germany's continuous naval rivalry was an open challenge to the British Empire. The Berlin-Bagdad plan threatened India; but the pan-German plan meant, above all, the subjugation of the Austrian Empire, of the Balkans, and of Turkey.

It was of vital importance for Germany that Austria should be absolutely dependent on her, especially as Italy was a rather passive member of the Triple Alliance, having herself anti-Austrian aspirations. William absolutely needed his "brilliant second," as he called Austria in a telegram to Goluchowski after the Conference of Algeciras. The attitude of Austria was, therefore, of fatal importance both for Germany and for Europe. Owing to the Germans and Magyars, who directed Austrian foreign policy, and who frustrated all Slav attempts to save it from this suicidal course, Austria steered more and more into the waters of pan-Germanism.

Whether Austria, under existing conditions, could have pursued a different course after the establishment of dualism is more than doubtful. Credit must be given, however, to Czech political leaders for having almost to the last hour made efforts to save Austria from this policy, and to preserve an independent position for her in foreign affairs. Thus Kramář, for instance, demanded repeatedly that Austria should cultivate friendly relations with France, and especially with Russia, so as not to be quite dependent on Germany. The Czechs contended that Austria, the majority of whose population was, after all, Slav, should be just to her own Slavs, and pursue a friendly policy towards Russia and Serbia. Such policy alone would have saved Austria from perdition. It seems that under Badeni and Goluchowski, both of whom were Poles, this policy was not looked upon unfavourably. Since 1877 relations with Russia improved considerably, and an agreement was concluded between Austria and Russia in Müritzsteg in 1903 concerning reforms in Macedonia. It seemed, also, that

Goluchowski's successor, Aerenthal, who knew the West little and did not like Prussia, and who during his stay as Ambassador in Petrograd evinced the greatest friendship for Russia, would continue to exert his influence in this direction. When Baron Aerenthal became Foreign Minister in 1906 he was known to be in favour of the Conservative policy of Archduke Francis Ferdinand. But later the Archduke was to become his greatest enemy, owing to Aerenthal's opposition to Hoetzendorf's proposal of a preventive war against Italy. Aerenthal, who was a hard-working man and possessed a great deal of knowledge, but lacked in perspicacity and strength of character, definitely estranged Russian sympathies from Austria in 1908.

In this connection it must be mentioned that the Czechs lost no opportunity in fostering a better understanding among the Slavs. The rule of the German minority in Austria and of the Magyar minority in Hungary was enabled partly because the Slavs were divided between the two halves of the monarchy, partly owing to a lack of understanding among themselves. The Poles especially, being embittered by the treatment of their compatriots in Russia, were easy to gain by the Austrian Government at no cost to the Austrian Germans, because their interests did not extend to Galicia. On the other hand, it must be admitted that in principle the Poles were not altogether opposed to the Slavs. Thus it was Badeni who was the author of the famous Language Ordinances of 1897 assuring the equality of Czech and German in Bohemia, and neither Badeni nor Goluchowski favoured too close an alliance with Prussia, who oppressed the Poles in Posen. If the Poles in Austria and in Russia could have been gained for the Slav cause, it would have not only strengthened the position of the Slavs of Austria, but it would have also facilitated an understanding between Russia and Austria. But the Poles could not be gained for the Slav cause so long as they were oppressed by Russia. With the knowledge and approval of Aerenthal, Kramář went, therefore, to Petrograd, and his arguments were favourably received by Stolypin and Izvolski. In 1908 was held the neo-Slav Congress in Prague under Kramář's auspices, followed two

years later by a similar congress in Sofia. It seemed that at last the Slavs—Poles and Russians, Serbs and Bulgarians—would agree between themselves. All these hopes were thwarted, however, by the perfidious behaviour of Aerenthal towards Russia and by the growing hostile attitude of Austria to Serbia, which lead directly to the war.

In 1908 the Russian Foreign Minister Izvolski met Baron Aerenthal in Buchlov, and it was agreed that the question of Bosnia, the Dardanelles, and of the Balkans generally should be referred to a European Conference. Already on October 3rd, however, Aerenthal announced—contrary to this agreement—the annexation of Bosnia. Not only was this a heavy blow for Serbia, since the population of Bosnia is Serbian, and therefore also for Russia, but it was a direct breach of the Buchlov Agreement and of the Treaty of Berlin. Russia had to yield, however, when Germany intervened and identified herself with Austria. From that time Austria embarked on an openly pan-German anti-Slav policy for the conquest of the Balkans, and all plans of mobilization were directed against Serbia and Russia. In 1909 Aerenthal proposed to Japan an alliance against Russia. At the same time Austria sent as her Ambassador to Russia Berchtold, who was to play a similar rôle for Austria in Petrograd as Lichnowski did for Germany in London. His personal charm, his air of innocence, and his generosity were to blind the eyes of the Russian society to the evil doings of Austria. That this man, who during the crisis of 1908-9 showed so much nervousness and irresolution, should soon come to hold the reins of the Austrian Government at a time when Austria's future fate would be finally decided, was truly tragic for the Habsburg Monarchy.

The direct responsibility for the war so far as Austria is concerned rests, however, besides the Austrian military circles, on Count Tisza, the Hungarian Premier, who was the real evil spirit and the real ruler of Austria-Hungary during the last years before the war. Baron von Szilassy, a Magyar and an eminent Austrian diplomat, who was opposed to the imperialistic policy of Aerenthal, Tisza, and Hoetzendorf, declares in his memoirs that Count Tisza told

him at least a month before the outbreak of the war that war on Serbia was inevitable, and that Russia could not effectually intervene. It was not Berchtold, but Tisza, who really dictated Austria's foreign policy through Count Burian and Forgach. Burian was Hungarian Minister to the Emperor, while Forgach, formerly Austrian Minister in Belgrade, was the famous author of the false documents in the Agram trial. The anti-Serbian feelings of both were beyond dispute, and their influence in Ballplatz was decisive. Szilassy testifies that the Vienna Foreign Office was so resolved on war against Serbia that they feared lest the Austrian ultimatum should be unconditionally accepted.

When the Great War broke out there was no doubt as to which side the Czechs would take. Not only was their very existence at stake, since a victorious Germany meant the end of all their just national aspirations, while the victory of the Entente offered them the achievement of their long-cherished independence—not only were all their sympathies on the side of their racial brothers, the Serbs and Russians—above all, the Czechs were prompted by principles of international morality to side with the Allies. When Masaryk issued his first public proclamation, signed by the representatives of all Czechoslovaks living abroad, in November 1915, he made it clear that the Czechs sided with the Allies "without regard as to whether they win or lose, but simply because their cause is just." The Czechs felt that Austria and Germany prepared and started the war with the aim of conquering Central Europe and strengthening autocracy, while the Allies fought a defensive struggle in the interests of freedom and democracy.

An open revolution was impossible under the existing conditions, yet the Czechoslovaks soon found means of expressing their true sentiments, through passive resistance at home, wholesale surrenders at the Front, and active resistance against Austria in the Allied countries. Austria on her side made war not only on her external but also on her internal enemies, on her own Slav population. Most Czech newspapers were either suppressed or else strictly censored, prominent deputies and leaders were imprisoned, and even sentenced to death without any legally justifiable

charge against them, civilians were interned on the flimsiest grounds of evidence about their sentiments, etc.

It was the spontaneous action of the Czech regiments in the Austrian Army, who surrendered voluntarily to Russia and Serbia without firing a single shot, which awakened the conscience of the political leaders, and strengthened their resolution to organize an active struggle against Austria. All party disputes were dropped, and a secret Committee (known as Maffia) was formed which included leaders of all parties. This Committee selected Professor Masaryk as its most suitable spokesman and sent him to organize and direct the action in the Allied countries. Professor Masaryk went first twice to Holland in order to get into touch with his French and English friends, then to Rome, and finally, in the beginning of 1915, to Geneva, which he made his temporary residence and wherefrom he kept in touch with Prague. Dr. Edward Beneš, his chief assistant, came several times from Prague to see him, until he too remained in Switzerland, and went with Masaryk to Paris and London to organize the Czechoslovak revolutionary action.

Masaryk's plans and the principles by which they were guided were outlined in a letter written by him to all Czech organizations abroad in March 1915: Czech efforts were to be united and concentrated on the aim of political independence, thereby voicing the feelings and wishes of the people at home. The Chief Committee would be in Prague, but it would have trustees in all the Allied countries. Masaryk warned against exaggerated romantic enthusiasm: no idle Radicalism avails, deeds only count. Similarly, he warned against too great an optimism in a quick Allied victory, and especially against too great a faith in Russia, though he was convinced that in the end the Allied cause would triumph. The first task of the Czechs abroad would be to convince the Allied public and responsible statesmen. It was also necessary to keep the Czechs abroad correctly informed about events at home. For this purpose it was decided to publish a French organ (*La Nation Tchèque*), which began to appear in May 1915, and a Czech organ (*Samostatnost*), which began to appear in August 1915. The

editor of the first became Professor Denis (later Dr. Beneš), of the second, Dr. L. Sychrava. Furthermore, a propaganda bureau had to be established in Geneva to obtain accurate information from Bohemia and pass it on to all organizations in the Allied countries. Having beforehand outlined his plans, which he also carried into effect, Masaryk emphasized the supreme principle of the whole action: "We must not depend on the Allies to give us independence—we must ourselves work for it: show Europe that an independent Bohemia is necessary and in the Allies' interest, and be ready to offer the greatest sacrifices for the common cause."

The complete moral and financial independence of the Czech action, its complete harmony with the nation at home, and its unity were surely its greatest and most jealously watched assets. The Czechoslovak National Council (Masaryk-Beneš-Štefánek), constituted in Paris in November 1916, relied for its financial aid entirely on the voluntary contributions of the Czechs abroad, especially in the United States, organized in the Czech National Alliance, and the Slovak League. Besides the two reviews mentioned above, the Council had its Press Bureaux and offices in Paris, later also in London, Rome, Russia, and the U.S.A.

The tactics of the National Council were dictated by the development of the circumstances of the war, but there is no doubt that in the main they were well planned beforehand. The objects of the Council were: (1) to organize the Czech colonies and the Czech prisoners of war for military and other action; (2) to show through memoranda, a systematic Press campaign, pamphlets, books, maps, lectures, and other propaganda, all facts concerning Bohemia, including both theoretic arguments and actual events proving the necessity of an independent Bohemia and the resolution of the Czechoslovaks to achieve it; (3) to exploit diplomatically the Czechoslovak resistance against Austria, and gain public opinion for the Czech cause in order to obtain from the Allied Governments not only a promise to liberate Bohemia, but an actual recognition of Czechoslovak sovereignty.

This recognition was obtained first from France, who in December 1917 permitted the formation of an independent Czechoslovak Army on the French Front, "placed from the political point of view under the direction of the Czechoslovak National Council." A similar recognition was obtained four months later from Italy. Thus arose the Czechoslovak Army in France and Italy, numbering together over 50,000 men, recruited chiefly from among Czechoslovak prisoners of war who went over to the Allies and volunteered to fight for them. In Russia, where the Czechoslovak prisoners were estimated at some 200,000, Czechoslovak regiments were constituted soon after the revolution in April and May 1917, and fought gallantly in the last Russian offensive near Zborow on July 2, 1917. On ground of the gallantry of the Czechs who from the outbreak of the war fought in the Allied Armies, and of those who later constituted the Czechoslovak Armies, the Czechoslovak National Council soon succeeded also in obtaining further political recognition.

Only an independent nation, it was argued, can have an independent and belligerent army. Bohemia, as a matter of fact, never ceased legally to be independent, and her position, therefore, was not dissimilar to that of Serbia, occupied by the enemy. In a letter dated June 29, 1918, the French Government seems to have appreciated these facts in proclaiming the right of the Czechoslovaks to independence "within their historic boundaries," and in recognizing "publicly and officially the Czechoslovak National Council as the supreme organ of their general interests, and the first step (*première assise*) towards the future Czechoslovak Government." A much greater interest, however, was evoked by the British declaration of August 9, 1918, in which it was stated that, "in consideration of their efforts to achieve independence, Great Britain regards the Czechoslovaks as an Allied nation, and recognizes the unity of the three Czechoslovak Armies as an Allied and belligerent Army waging a regular warfare against Austria-Hungary and Germany." Great Britain also recognized "the right of the Czechoslovak National Council, as the supreme organ of the Czechoslovak national interests, and

as the present trustee of the future Czechoslovak Government, to exercise supreme authority over this Allied and belligerent Army." This recognition was given not only on the ground of French recognition, but especially in view of the deeds of the Czechoslovak Army in Siberia and of the internal disintegration in Austria. The National Council (Dr. Beneš) concluded soon after (September 3, 1918) a treaty with His Majesty's Government in which the National Council was given the right: to float a loan on account of the future Czechoslovak Government, to take part in all Allied Conferences dealing with questions affecting Czechoslovak interests, to issue regular passports through its representatives, the holders of such passports to be treated as members of an Allied nation, and to appoint a representative in London who should enjoy all the privileges of a diplomatic agent. The Council proceeded immediately to organize a Legation in London which was opened in Grosvenor Place on Armistice Day (November 11, 1918). A few days later Dr. Osuský, now Minister in Paris, handed to Mr. Balfour his credentials as Czechoslovak Chargé d'Affaires. The British recognition was followed by that of the U.S.A., who recognized the National Council as "a *de facto* belligerent Government." The change of President Wilson's point of view from a mere demand for "autonomy" for the subject peoples of Austria to that of complete independence was in no small degree due to the personal influence of Professor Masaryk, who arrived in the States in May 1918 from Siberia.

Who were the leaders and organizers of the successful Czech movement for independence? The National Council was composed of three members: Masaryk, Beneš, and Štefánik. Masaryk commanded the necessary authority as a Czech deputy and savant both among his compatriots and abroad. His unimpeachable character, great learning, eloquence, strength of personality, frankness, and sincerity made him an ideal leader of the movement. His right-hand was Dr. Beneš, without whom Professor Masaryk could hardly have achieved all he did. Having myself known Dr. Beneš a long time before the war, and having collaborated with him also during the war, when after the departure

of President Masaryk for Russia I was left in sole charge of the Czech Press Bureau, and later of the London Office of the Council, I may well give a testimony of the great qualities which he already then displayed and which make him one of the best diplomats that not only our country but Europe has produced. Dr. Beneš before the war studied law and philosophy in Paris, London, and Germany, and has a thorough theoretic knowledge of politics and sociology as well as a practical knowledge of languages. And, though he may lack the oratory and experience of a popular political leader, he possesses a rare gift of psychological insight and perspicacity, a power of convincing which is given only to men who possess knowledge and have a clear idea of their aims and of the ways to achieve them, and, finally, he possesses great energy, optimism, perseverance, and strength of will, which assure him success. The other lieutenant of Masaryk, Štefánik, was a Slovak, whose services to France before the war as astronomer, and whose charm of personality, gained many influential friends in France for him and incidentally for the Czech cause. Milan Štefánik enlisted in the French Army at the beginning of the war, and distinguished himself with many feats of bravery as an aviator, so that he became quickly promoted until he achieved the rank of General and, after the war, Minister of War. During the tragic Serbian retreat he escaped being captured by the Germans by flying on a deficient machine over the Albanian mountains, and thus was the first to bring the news about the catastrophe to the Allies. He rendered signal service to the Czech cause both in diplomatic action and in the organization of Czechoslovak Armies. Unfortunately Fate did not destine him to see his liberated country, for he met his death in a tragic aeroplane accident when returning home from Italy in 1919 on the frontier of Slovakia.

It now only remains to give a brief account of the actual events of the war affecting Bohemia. The Czechoslovak resistance at home was of necessity for a long time of a passive character. The Austrian Reichsrath remained unsummoned until May 1917, and the Press was muzzled, so that the Czech people had no means to voice their feelings

publicly. The story of Bohemia during the first three years of the war is therefore limited to wholesale surrenders of the soldiers on the Front, and to the melancholy story of senseless and cruel Austrian persecutions.

And yet the Czechs were not asleep. They were resolved on revolution, but it was not to be a blind, fantastic revolt which would have ended in senseless slaughter of the population. The Czech revolution was to take the form of an organized struggle, of a regular warfare, founded both on moral and legal grounds. The Austrian Emperor was never crowned King of Bohemia, and legally Bohemia never lost her independence. Austria had therefore no right to conscript Czech soldiers to fight for her ; still less had she the moral right to send Slavs against Slavs to fight for the German cause and to terrorize the population. The Czechs were fully justified in waging war on Austria.

Czechs living in Allied countries realized their duty immediately on the outbreak of the war. A Czech legion was formed in Kiev and swore allegiance to the Russian flag on September 28, 1914. Czechs in France and England joined the French Foreign Legion. But the formation of regular Czechoslovak Armies among prisoners of war and their recognition required a great effort of organization, propaganda, and diplomacy on the part of the National Council, which only much later was to be crowned with success. It was especially regrettable that the old Russian Government showed lack of good will and understanding for the Czech cause, and refused to allow the Czechs, who voluntarily went over to Russia, to join Allied ranks. Even Italy (Baron Sonnino) for a long time had conscientious objections to using prisoners of war to fight for her, because to fight against Austria required no small courage for the Czechs : if they were captured they were treated as traitors and hanged.

Not less difficult was it to convince public opinion of the justice of Czechoslovak aspirations. Knowledge about our country in the Allied countries was scarce, while Austria and the Magyars still had many sympathizers. In the first place the responsibility of Austria was not known, nor was it realized how completely she fell under the control of

Germany. As the Allies had still very uncertain ideas about the aspirations of the Austrian Slavs and their importance for the Allied cause, and as in any case the break-up of Austria was not among their war aims, it is not surprising that the Allies for a long time hoped to be able to "detach" Austria from Germany and conclude a separate peace with her. Thus in August 1917, and again in February 1918, Major Armand negotiated, with the knowledge of Ribot and Lloyd George, with the Austrian Count Revertera for a separate peace. Equally known are the efforts of Emperor Charles to come to an understanding with France and England in March-May 1917 through Prince Sixte of Bourbon, which failed owing to Austria's insistence on keeping Trieste. On the other hand, the Allies proclaimed, in their Note of January 1917 to President Wilson, that "the liberation of Italians, Slavs, Rumanians, and Czechoslovaks from foreign domination" was among their war aims. How this should be accomplished did not seem clear. On July 30, 1917, Mr. Balfour refused to discuss the question as to what should happen with Austria, who, he said, should be left to settle her own internal problems. Similarly, even Lord Robert Cecil declared on July 24, 1917, that Austria was not England's chief enemy, and that as regards Slav aspirations he would think it dangerous to go beyond the Allied Note to President Wilson. The great pro-Austrian, Mr. Noel Buxton, noted with satisfaction in the House of Commons on October 31, 1917, that these two speeches produced a very good effect on Austria. Even later, believing the pacifists who asserted that Austria was following a "new orientation" under the peaceful new Emperor and his "Slav" Ministers (Counts Clam-Martinic and Czernin), the Allies showed a certain indulgence towards Austria. Somewhat ambiguous were the words of Mr. Lloyd George, who declared on January 7, 1918: "Though we agree with President Wilson that the break-up of Austria-Hungary is no part of our war aims, we feel that unless genuine self-government on true democratic principles is granted to those Austro-Hungarian nationalities who have long desired it, it is impossible to hope for the removal of the causes of unrest in that part of Europe." But even

these tactful allusions were fortunately rejected by Hertling and Czernin, and an end was at last made to all peace tentatives through the Clemenceau-Czernin controversy in April 1918, in which the secret Austrian peace intrigues were revealed and which cost Czernin his seat. That all these attempts were frustrated was in no small degree due to the deeds of the Czech legions in the Allied Armies, to Czechoslovak propaganda, and to the courageous attitude of the Czechs at home, who, especially since the opening of the Reichsrath, made no secret of their determination to break up Austria. Last but not least, it was due to the successes of the Czechoslovak National Council in achieving the first valuable diplomatic promises and recognitions.

The foremost object of Czech propaganda was to reveal the pan-German plans and to show that the Czech question, necessitating the break-up of Austria, was a European question. The aim of Germany in provoking the World War was to carry out the pan-German plan of Central Europe and of Berlin-Bagdad. In this scheme Austria formed Germany's "bridge to the East." Without her the *Drang nach Osten* was a futile dream. In order, therefore, to destroy the pan-German plan it was necessary to destroy Austria. This would at the same time mean the liberation of the Slavs, and thus form a natural solution of the Austrian problem. Professor Masaryk himself followed closely the Press and read all, especially German books, which had any reference to the war. He lectured at the Sorbonne on "The Slavs in the World," and at King's College on "The Rôle of Small Nations," on "Bohemia," and on "Russia"; he wrote memoranda about the strength of the Central Powers for the Allied Statesmen, he contributed articles to such journals and reviews as *New Europe*, *Pall Mall*, *Weekly Dispatch*, *Everyman*, and many others, and in short he left no means untried in his effort to win the public—especially in England—to his cause. In his work he was assisted by his English friends, among whom we may mention Lord Bryce, Mr. A. F. Whyte, Mr. Dillon, Sir Arthur Evans, Dr. J. Holland Rose, Mr. Ronald Burrows, Mr. R. F. Young, Mr. F. P. Marchant, Mr. J. Baker, and, above all, Mr. Wickham Steed and Mr. Seton-Watson, both

of whom delivered lectures and wrote important books and articles in favour of our cause. In France, Czech propaganda was lead by Dr. Beneš and Ernest Denis.

Czech propaganda in England was not, however, without its bitter opponents. The greatest misconception perhaps existed about the word "dismemberment." People were ignorant of the fact that Austria was not a nation, but a conglomeration of nations whose majority wished for Austria's dissolution. Out of the total population of fifty-one million in Austria-Hungary the Germans numbered ten million, the Magyars eight million, the Slavs twenty-seven million, and the Rumanians and Italians about five million. In Austria the ruling Germans formed 24 per cent. of the population, in Hungary the Magyars formed less than 50 per cent. And yet it was only the Austrian-Germans and the Magyars who wished for the war. The ignorance prevailing about Austria-Hungary was readily exploited by the pro-Austrian Radicals, among whom the most prejudiced were Mr. Noel Buxton, M.P., Mr. H. N. Brailsford, and Mr. Massingham, whose opinions were voiced by *The Nation*, *The Herald*, and the *Manchester Guardian*. The arguments which these would-be Liberals used in defence of the autocratic Habsburg Empire against the freedom of the Slavs were such as might have been fabricated by the Vienna Foreign Office itself. The dismemberment of Austria was described as an imperialistic object, the public was warned against pan-Slavism even after the collapse of Russia, and our aims were declared impossible of achievement and therefore only apt to prolong the war indefinitely. And yet the danger of pan-Slavism existed only in the minds of German and Magyar propagandists and their dupes. The Slavs did not wish for union with Russia. Their only object was the legitimate demand for freedom. Russia was either hostile to the Catholic Slavs (Poles) or else indifferent to them (Czechs, Croats, Slovenes). Responsible statesmen in the West had in their conservatism scruples against dismemberment which would "Balkanize" Central Europe. Also they were not sure whether the Slavs really wanted independence or only autonomy in some new federated Austria, and proofs had to be furnished in support of our

claims, which fortunately were not difficult to obtain. We have shown that for a long time the Slavs, though economically exploited by the Germans and deprived of their national rights, have loyally tried through constitutional means to bring Austria to reason. The war has made an end to all these efforts, since Austria sold herself body and soul to Germany. In the "War and Peace Supplement" of *The Nation* for June 1917 Professor Masaryk refuted all arguments in favour of a federalistic solution of the Austrian problem. The only democratic federation would be a federation of nations, not of the historic provinces, which would not solve the nationality problems. But a federation of nations would mean a complete reconstruction of the historic frontiers, which would be bitterly opposed by the Germans and even more by the Magyars. Moreover, it would not solve the national problems of the Poles, Rumanians, Jugoslavs, and Italians, who would be left divided: a part of them would live in their own sovereign States, another part would continue to live in Austria. If they were detached, then the Czechoslovaks would be in a minority against the Germans and Magyars. In any case, the Germans and Magyars would always be opposed to a policy hostile to Berlin. Neither they nor the dynasty would give up their political supremacy, and accept any sincerely democratic solution. That is obvious especially to-day, when the Germans of Czechoslovakia, although enjoying more than full rights of free citizens, still sometimes persist in senseless hostility to the Republic, because they cannot get used to the idea that they are no more lords and masters.

It must be admitted, however, that not all Liberals and Socialists were so prejudiced against us as Mr. Brailsford and Mr. Noel Buxton. The *New Statesman* and Mr. Hyndman's *Justice* were among the staunchest advocates of the freedom of Austrian Slavs. They rightly realized that Austria, always a stronghold of reaction and in every respect a backward State, and the degenerate, bigot Habsburg dynasty could never become democratic. The Austrians have again during the Great War shown through their senseless persecutions and reign of terror that they "are really the greatest brutes that ever called themselves

by the undeserved name of civilized men " (Palmerston, 1849). The words of Gladstone, spoken in 1880, were still true: "Austria has been the steady, unflinching foe of freedom in every country in Europe. The name of Austria has on all occasions been the symbol of misgovernment and oppression in other countries. There is not an instance, there is not a spot upon the whole map of Europe, where you can lay your finger and say: There Austria did good." There is very little cause, indeed, to regret Austria's break-up, which she has brought on herself through her own fault.

We said that proofs about the true attitude of the Slavs were easy to supply. They were: the wholesale surrenders of Czech soldiers, the formation of the Czech Armies in France, Italy, and Russia, unanimous action of all Czechoslovaks abroad, and manifestations of the nation at home. With the opening of the Reichsrath there could no more be any doubt left about the unanimous will of the Czech people to independence. The declaration of the whole Czech delegation on entry of Parliament spoke in favour of "the union of all branches of the Czechoslovak people in a single democratic State." At the memorable meeting of all Czech deputies in Prague on January 6, 1918, a resolution was passed in which, in the words of the Austrian Premier, Seidler, "we in vain look for a distant echo of dynastic or State allegiance," and which demanded that the Czechoslovaks should be represented independently at the Peace Conference. All these facts were too explicit to be ignored.

The last chapter of the story of the Czechoslovak struggle for independence took place in the last six months of the war. The Czechoslovaks had their own regular armies on the Russian, French, and Italian Fronts. In Russia these fought gallantly in July 1917, but when Russia collapsed nothing remained for them but to retreat. Some succeeded in being transported to France, but the majority resolved on crossing Siberia in order to go over to the Western Front. In Siberia they encountered the opposition of the Bolsheviks and of Austro-German prisoners, against whom they were obliged to fight. This struggle, in the words of Mr. Lloyd George, "filled us all with admiration for the

courage, persistence, and self-control " of the Czechoslovaks, and showed " what can be done to triumph over time, distance, and lack of material resources by those holding the spirit of freedom in their hearts."

In the meantime the Czechs in Bohemia missed no time in showing their feelings, and in coming to an understanding with the other oppressed nationalities. On April 13, 1918, a large meeting of representatives of all political and other organizations took place in Prague, at which an oath was taken to " hold on unto victory, to remain firm until the achievement of Czechoslovak independence." The Rome Congress of oppressed nationalities in April 1918 had also its repercussion in Prague. On May 16th many representatives of Southern Slavs, Poles, Rumanians, and Italians came to Prague in order to manifest their solidarity with the Czechoslovaks in thier struggle for freedom. The disintegration of Austria began soon after. On July 2nd the Czech deputy Stránský declared in the Reichsrath: " We regard Austria as a centuries-old crime on humanity. The removal of this crime is not a question for us. It is our highest national duty to betray Austria whenever and wherever we can. We shall hate Austria, we shall fight against her, and, God willing, we shall in the end smash her to pieces." On July 13th the Czechoslovak National Committee was formed in Prague from leaders of all parties which began openly to prepare for taking over the Government of Czechoslovakia as soon as an opportunity should present itself. On October 2nd Deputy Staněk declared in the Austrian Reichsrath, in the name of all Czech deputies, that the National Council in Paris were their true spokesmen, with whom Austria would have to negotiate for peace. Soon afterwards the Austrian Poles left Vienna for Warsaw to prepare for a united Poland, while the Southern Slavs organized their territories under their National Committee in Zagreb. On October 4th Count Burian begged President Wilson through Swedish diplomatic channels for an armistice, to which President Wilson replied on the 18th that he was no longer at liberty to accept a mere autonomy of the Czechoslovaks and Jugoslavs as a basis of peace (his Fourteen Points included the demand for the freest

opportunity of autonomous development), having meanwhile recognized the Czechoslovak National Council as a *de facto* belligerent government, and that he was therefore "obliged to insist that they and not he shall be the judges of what action on the part of the Austro-Hungarian Government will satisfy their aspirations." On October 27th Count Andrassy accepted President Wilson's Note unconditionally, "especially as regards the rights of Czechoslovaks and Jugoslavs." On October 28th the Czechoslovak National Committee in Prague proclaimed an independent Czechoslovak Republic, and Professor Masaryk became its President by acclamation. Dr. Edward Beneš is to this day the young Republic's Foreign Minister, and directs its foreign affairs towards a peaceful consolidation of Central Europe.

The whole story of the Czechoslovak Republic during its first eight years of existence is one of hard work and effort towards consolidation. In internal politics it meant reorganization of all forms of national life towards freedom, racial justice, and democracy, and towards the strengthening of economic powers through a wise financial and trade policy; in external politics it meant a sincere effort for understanding with former enemies (Germany, Austria, Hungary) and with neighbouring friends (Poland, Rumania, Jugoslavia). The Czechoslovaks wish to prove that their aim in dismembering Austria was not destructive but constructive: only where liberty and democracy prevails can sincere co-operation exist among free, independent, and nationally united nations. How far Czechoslovakia has succeeded is clear from the fact that it is to-day the most stable country in Central Europe both politically and economically. Its successful efforts to bring together all the States of Central Europe desirous of peace in the so-called Little Entente prove also beyond doubt that the Czechoslovak Republic has justified its ambition to become a bulwark of peace in Central Europe.

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It would be useless to enumerate all the Czech historical writings on Bohemia. We may only mention that in Chapter II (Origins and Early History) we relied chiefly on the authority of Professor J. Matiegka and Professor L. Niederle. A great deal of interesting, though somewhat out-of-date information on the early Slavs, as well as on the religious development of Bohemia and other Slav countries, is contained in the English work of Count Valerian Krasínski ("Religious History of the Slavonic Nations," 1848).

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F. Žilka, and others. In English the best books, besides the work of Count Lützow mentioned above, are the following: Gillet, "Life and Times of John Hus," 1871; W. H. Schwarze, "John Hus," New York, 1915; A. H. Wratislaw, "John Hus," London, 1882; David S. Schaff, "John Hus," London, 1916, which contain also a list of earlier works on John Hus, and J. Herben's, "John Hus and his Followers," London, 1926. In French we must mention at least Ernest Denis' "Huss et la Guerre des Hussites," 1878, as being the best.

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PART II

LITERATURE AND MUSIC

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS

THE preceding historical part must be considered, despite its extent, but as a commentary or complement to the second part. We in Bohemia are apt to exaggerate the importance of historical study. Our historic consciousness is very keen. But could anyone aspire to understand the soul of a nation without knowing its history? How could we better prove than through history that Czechoslovakia is not a new country conjured up by Wilson, Lloyd George, and Clemenceau from the ruins of the defunct Dual Monarchy, but that it is as old as any other European nation? And, above all, could anyone aspire to understand the ideals of modern Bohemia and Slovakia without knowing their past? For whether we analyse modern Czechoslovak music, art, and literature, or examine its religious and political life, we invariably must have recourse to history in which Czech nationalism, pervading Czech modern life, sought its chief source of inspiration.

In the following chapters we shall endeavour to deal with the chief aspects of Czechoslovak music and literature¹ from which, in our opinion, the reader may obtain some idea about the spirit and character of the Czechoslovak nation. We must emphasize again that our work is not an encyclopædia but merely a sketch, and neither the first nor the second part of the book exhausts the subject fully. We have chosen only the most essential events and aspects of Bohemian history, and only the most important points of modern and contemporary Czechoslovak music and literature, to illustrate our conclusions about Czechoslovak

¹ Our original intention to include in this book also a chapter on painting and sculpture has become unnecessary owing to the publication of *Modern and Contemporary Czech Art*, by A. Matějček and Z. Wirth (Routledge, London, 1925).

civilization. If our work do nothing more than stimulate general interest in Czechoslovakia, and prompt the public to seek for translations from our literature and for the production of our music, it will have fully accomplished its mission.

To divine the character of a people is not an easy task. Everyone is apt to exaggerate the virtues of his own nation. But to be an impartial judge is difficult even for a foreign observer, who is inclined to draw hasty conclusions about a nation's good or bad points on grounds of superficial observation or outward impressions. How many people have been influenced by the gay time they had in Vienna or Budapest into considering the Austrians and Hungarians a charming people, and into thinking, therefore, kindly also of Vienna and Budapest as political factors? On the other hand, the difficulty of learning Slav languages and the personal discomfort experienced in a Slav capital induced many to regard the Slavs with derision. In any case, there is no such thing as an absolute superiority of one European nation over another which would justify it to impose its nationality on others. Only the Germans and the Magyars could speak of spreading their *Kultur* by forcible denationalization of others.

If we attempt to examine those sources from which it is possible to obtain the knowledge of a nation's character, we shall find that they are both of a spiritual and material nature. A nation's character is obviously reflected in its folk-music and art, in its language, philosophy and religion, poetry and literature. But material conditions and outward factors, not only natural dispositions, are of great importance for the formation of national character. Thus the geographic position and climatic conditions, education, political and religious conditions, the influence of foreign civilization are all factors which play an important rôle in the development of a nation.

It cannot be emphasized enough that by their whole history, their religious development, and the present state of their culture the Czechoslovaks belong to the West European, or rather the Central European, sphere of civilization. They do not form any "bridge" between Eastern

and Western Europe in the strict sense of the word, neither do they belong to the Balkan sphere. Even geographically they belong only partly to the Danubian region. There is almost no Eastern influence in the whole of our history, and there are no traces of any exotic Oriental influence in our art such as may be discerned, for instance, in Russian art. The advanced state of the present Czechoslovak civilization is so much more remarkable as the Czechs are in many respects a comparatively young nation, though having a very old historic tradition. What they achieved they achieved by their own efforts, through hard work and education despite adverse circumstances, consisting chiefly in the backward and demoralizing influence of conservative Austria and in the oppression of Czechoslovak nationalism. The neglected condition of Slovakia is, of course, amply explained by the fact that she lived under the barbarous regime of the Magyars, compared with which even reactionary Austria seemed liberal and progressive. Modern Czech literature, music, and art, the high standard of education of the Czechs and their advanced political and economic conditions, are the result of not more than a hundred years old effort. But general progress in Bohemia has been very rapid and intense, especially during the past seventy years, so that it is no exaggeration to assert that in many respects the Czechs are several decades in advance of the Balkan nations. One explanation lies in the natural wealth and favourable climatic conditions of Bohemia.

The geographic proximity of Bohemia to Germany, of course, brought the Czechs under the influence of German civilization, against which they had to struggle for emancipation as much as against the political pressure of Imperial Germany to the East. But this influence had also many advantages for our development. It taught us to be thrifty and industrious, and made us efficient in science and organization; it made us less emotional and more rational than the other Slavs. Masaryk says, in his *Czech Question*, that as regards character the Teutons are nearer to the Slavs than the Latins, and sees in it the explanation why German influence did not prove more detrimental to the Czechs than might be expected.

We need not here analyse in great detail wherein the three great groups of European races, the Latins, the Teutons, including the Anglo-Saxons, and the Slavs, differ. If we compare, for instance, the English and Scandinavian languages with French or Italian, we get at once also an idea of the difference in character between the Teutonic and Latin races. The former are more rational, intellectual, reserved, and calm in temperament, the latter possess a quicker perception and temperament and greater imagination. Also the Slavs possess certain characteristics in common by which they differ from other races. They are even more sensitive and emotional, though not more temperamental, than the Latins with great talent for art, but with the Teutons they have in common a sound philosophic outlook on life. The Czechs in particular have many qualities in common with the Anglo-Saxons. Though they are not so reserved, but more impulsive and emotional, their mentality and outlook on life are similar to those of the English. Like the English, the Czechs are conciliatory and peaceful in spirit; they have the same sense for fair play, the same belief in justice, peace, and democracy, in progress through better education and higher morality. The Czechs have also a great deal of the common sense and idealistic realism, as well as the spirit of sound economics, of the Anglo-Saxons. Radical nationalistic Chauvinism had at all times few advocates and is foreign to the Czech spirit.

It was Masaryk who pointed out that the Slavs in general are more humanitarian than the Germans, which does not prevent them, however, from being brave or even cruel. This apparent incongruity in character is especially striking with the Russians. Leroy-Beaulieu tries to explain it by the influence of the climate, by the extremes of severe winters and hot summers in Russia. He sees in it also an explanation of the passivity and fatalistic resignation of the Russians: "The Russian soldier is the most enduring soldier in Europe. In that respect he may be compared only to his inveterate enemy, the Turk. They both have a capacity of suffering and endurance which is foreign to West European nations. And yet the Russian nation is not

and never was warlike by nature. Whatever it may have conquered, it has not the spirit of conquest and expansion. It is by nature peaceful, and sees in war an evil to which it gives way only in order to obey God and the Czar." Leroy-Beaulieu rightly observes that a Russian can be very cordial, but also very cold-hearted, very sensitive, but sometimes also very cruel.¹ In a fight a Russian soldier is relentless, but when the battle is over he is kind-hearted and magnanimous to his enemy. It is owing to the discord of these extremes in character, due probably to their naturally emotional temperament, that the Slavs are accused of fickleness and inconsistency. As a rule the Russian reasons in a practical, common-sense way; he does not like abstract thinking, and prefers positive science to metaphysics. He abhors sentimentality, which is foreign to his realistic outlook. But all the same the Russian is sensitive. From the melancholy of the Russian soul is born his mysticism. This melancholy often borders on fatalism: the calm equanimity of the Russian peasant is astonishing. These qualities of the Russian character are to a great extent also common to the other Slavs. The Czechoslovaks in particular, however, are the most rational and the most advanced in general education of the Slavs, as we have shown by the comparison of Kollár's rationalism and humanism with the mystic Messianism of Mickiewicz and the orthodox pan-Slavism of Kirějevsky. And yet the Czechs are eminently Slav in character. Quite apart from the fact that the Czech national spirit as revealed in Czech music, art, and literature, alternating between lyrical romanticism and sincere realism, has evinced great innate similarity with the spirit of other Slavs, the Czech character is in many ways different from that of the Germans. The German is more blunt, straightforward, and brutally direct, while the Czech is sharper in wits, more sensitive, emotional, meek, and kind-hearted. This characteristic meekness may be observed even more in Slovakia. In Bohemia the Czechs are more hardened, owing to their continual daily struggle with the Germans, and also owing to a higher level of education, which raised

¹ See Maxim Gorki, *Lenine et le Paysan Russe*. Paris, 1924.

their pride and self-confidence. Other qualities which the Czechs have in common with other Slavs are their artistic inclinations and their humanitarian love of peace. Kollár says: "The Slavs have enough strength and energy, enough bravery and audacity to conquer the tenth part of the world. But the Slavs never aspired to world domination, never entertained schemes of bloodshed and conquest, because they respected even the liberties of their enemies and altogether preferred to live in peace than to wage wars."

The humanitarian mission of the Czechoslovak nation as a small nation has been defined both by Komenský and Palacký. Komenský was convinced of the equal importance of every nation and every individual for humanity, and advocated the progress of humanity through education. Palacký's aim was to show the meaning of Czech history and the mission of the Czech nation in the world. To him the climax of our history appeared in our Reformation, and especially in the movement of the Bohemian Brethren. According to Palacký it was the discrepancy between the idea of Christian life and real life which actuated the old Czechs to efforts for the realization of Christianity on this earth. The Czechs never waged wars of conquest, but they were at all times ready to take up arms in the interests of higher morality, justice, and civilization.

No wonder that our regeneration was inspired also by the lofty ideals of the French Revolution. The humanitarian ideas which proclaimed equality, liberty and fraternity, and which saw in a harmony between human nature and reason a basis for cultural development, left no room for any empty Chauvinism. Narrow-minded nationalistic romanticism found always staunch opponents in our greatest men, in Dobrovský, Havlíček, Neruda, Machar, and Masaryk. Real idealistic patriotism, respecting the rights of others, is of course by no means incompatible with humanitarian ideals. National individualism cannot be better employed than if it stands in the service of humanity.

This brings us to the question of the relation between art and nationalism, of which we shall again and again have the opportunity to speak in the following chapters. It is,

in fact, through art that the soul of a nation finds its best expression, and it is chiefly in art that we must look for the revelation of the Czechoslovak spirit. The question, therefore, arises whether and how far nationalism is admissible in art.

In so far as the aim of every art lies in the same ideals, all art is international. In fact, a poem or a musical composition which has for its chief aim nationalist propaganda or is a mere imitation of folk-music, and does not conform to other chief exigencies which we put on art, is not art at all. Nationalistic egotism is equally as objectionable as personal egotism and has no room in art. Every work of art must, above all, strive to be art. On the other hand, every art is more or less national. National allegiance of the artist, the fact that he belongs by language, blood, and education to a certain nation, is something inseparable from his artistic personality. The national soul lives even more intensely in the soul of the artist and in his creation, even though he does not consciously strive to express it. In our literature the most typical, consciously Czech writers were Erben, Neruda, Machar, Březina, Sova, and Jirásek; in our music, Smetana and Dvořák. Similarly, the Polish spirit found its best expression in Chopin, the Norwegian in Grieg, the German in Schubert, Schumann and Wagner, and the English in Elgar and Vaughan Williams. And yet none of these composers is considered less great for the fact that he consciously strove to embody the spirit of his own nation in his work.

What, then, is true art; where are we to seek the true criterion by which alone to distinguish true art from false, good art from bad? The aim of art is to uplift humanity towards the ideals of beauty, virtue, and truth through an inspired interpretation of Nature and Man. "Nature is the Art of God," says Sir Thomas Browne. And indeed, what poem could be more beautiful than the mystery of Nature! And what depth of noble feelings, wisdom, and kindness may be hidden even in the most humble human being! It is the mission of the artist to reveal to us the mysteries of life and Nature. As Ruskin says, the greatest thing that art can do is to give a true picture of a noble

human soul, and Shakespeare prompts the artists to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature.

Although a high standard of culture and past traditions of a nation can and does produce great artists, a genius must be born and cannot be made. The first condition for a man to become an artist is to be gifted with that particular power of observation and perception which is so characteristic of every great artist. An artist's intuition, his insight and his sensitiveness, are keener than those of other people :—

Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys and fears,
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

WORDSWORTH.

The artist sees the world and understands it better than the rest of us. Masaryk, in his *Study of Poetical Works*, talks of a poet's specific outlook on life : " The cognition of the artist is surely the highest form of human cognition. Everybody can acquire the highest exaltation and probably also the highest edification in works of art. The comprehension of a truly great artist is the best conception of the world." An artist shows us not only what he saw, but how he saw and understood it, and what impressions, emotions, and sensations he experienced in this cognition.

This gift of higher comprehension is closely bound up with the artist's faculty of expressing his feelings and ideas. His task does not, however, consist in merely imitating or describing Nature and life. While nobody can become a truly great artist without sufficient study and erudition, training alone cannot make a man into an artist. Although artistic comprehension can only be expressed through artistic form and style, a work of art does not depend on form alone. Even a reproductive artist, however perfect technically, is only an acrobat, unless he knows how to interpret what the author meant to express through his work, and unless he himself possesses artistic talent and the gift of artistic comprehension. In art the beauty of form and style are as equally important as the contents, the ideas expressed through the work. We talk of the artist's capacity

of putting his own soul into his work. An artist creates because he cannot do otherwise—for the sake of art alone, not for material gain or self-glorification. Every genius must possess a great independence of spirit, readiness to self-sacrifice for the sake of his ideals, humility, and sincerity. Both Tolstoy and Ruskin saw in the artist's sincerity the touchstone of the value of his work. But naturally the artist must know also how to express his feelings, ideas, and experience, how to interpret nature and humanity in an original way—in short, how to embody his soul in his work in such a manner and form as to make it a work of art. Sincerity in the relation of art to life, perfection and beauty of form, the intrinsic value of contents and originality, are all equally important factors.

In his ode on "The Poet," Tennyson expressed the artist's gift of insight and his mission in the world as follows :—

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good and ill,
He saw thro' his own soul,
The marvel of the everlasting will,
An open scroll
Before him lay . . . The fruitful wit grew
And bravely furnish'd all abroad to fling
The winged shafts of Truth
To throng with stately blooms the breathing Spring
Of Hope and Youth.

And with the poet's word Wisdom "shook the World." Here we come to the third postulate of art, to the question of the relation of art to life and ethics. It was Emerson who declared that all higher beauty contains a moral factor. If we analyse closer wherein consists the real value of art, where lies its guarantee of immortality, we find that it is in its moral, philosophic, and religious mission in life. Plato insisted that politics ought to be subordinate to the principles of absolute morality, and the same applies also to art.

It follows, indeed, from the artist's mission to interpret Nature and Man, who are but creations of the Almighty. Beauty, in fact, inspires us with the conviction that there is a higher significance in life as the work of God, that the Universe is governed by the principles of absolute good, by truth and beauty. A true artist is the collaborator of the

Creator, and his principles must therefore be in harmony with His ideals. If we recognize that there is transcendental truth and morality, art must inspire us and help us to discover them and uplift us to those ideals which form an answer to the question of why we live. Life is full of constant struggle between good and evil, and art contributes in no small degree towards our conquests of bad instincts, towards our faith in life and towards greater happiness. The mysterious voice of God, which is inborn in every human soul and prompts us to discover the Divine laws of the Universe, has no better collaborator and inspirer than art.

Art cannot live without principles. There cannot be any compromise between good and bad in life or art. Even when it describes also the evil, it must never confound moral values. Oscar Wilde's statement that he knows of no moral or immoral books, but only books well or badly written, is false sophistry. Immoral music and literature, even when striving to be beautiful in form, are bound to fail. Literature or paintings that appeal to lower human instincts, to base passions or perverse sensuality, are false art. Michel Angelo says: "Woe to him who dares and is blind enough to degrade beauty to the ignominy of the senses."

But morality in art must not be understood in a narrow-minded, bigot spirit. Even nudity is pure and beautiful if created and looked at in a pure spirit. What could be purer than Roman and Greek sculpture, embodying the ideal of the dignity and beauty of the human body? Similarly, in literature we do not look for cheap moralizings. Many great writers have, indeed, denounced middle-class morals, bigot hypocrisy, social conventions, and prejudices. All modern literature is striving for a higher conception of religion and morality in search of Truth. But all art, even where it has not this philosophical aim directly expressed, is moral in the wider sense of the word, if it serves the ideals of Beauty and Truth. A poem on the beauty of nature or a great musical work is truly a prayer, a hymn to the Creator. In fact, no true art can be immoral, for really immoral art is no art.

It follows that through its moral responsibility art has considerable influence on the development of a nation. In the following chapters we will try to show what the Czechoslovak regeneration owes to music and literature. Art reflects life, but it also creates it. An author is an educator because he is a creator, and while it is true that an artist is the product of his times and surroundings, it is equally true that he is the pioneer of progress and that he helps to mould the spirit of his generation. The Czech regeneration could hardly have been achieved by the scientist or the politician without the aid of the artist as well. Czech nationalism had not been reborn, had Bohemia not produced Erben, Čelakovský, Neruda, Smetana, and Dvořák, in whose works the Czech nation refound itself and expressed its individuality.

Art and philosophy inspired Czech nationalism with those high ideals in which alone lies the progress and salvation of humanity. In this era of materialism we cannot, indeed, look for the solution of world problems elsewhere than in humanitarian ideals, in the promotion of a better understanding among nations, classes, and individuals, in the raising of intellectual and moral culture. If the nineteenth century stood for progress of positive science at the expense of art and ethics, the twentieth century ought to return to the classic ideals of ethical values in human life and to the Christian ideal of human brotherhood in place of sheer materialism. Not through national egotism or class warfare, but through better education, higher morality, and a better spirit of human friendship can humanity hope to progress. After all, the advanced state of English civilization, and even the material prosperity of the English race are, as in the case of the Czechs, chiefly due to its religious spirit and idealism. Let us, therefore, even in the future, look towards spiritual advancement and towards the noble ideals of art for progress and happiness.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE

A. CZECH LITERATURE.

The Development of Czech Literature.

IN literature more than in any other sphere of their activities the Czech regenerators were handicapped. Not only was the literary Czech language neglected, because music and poetry lived only in the folk-song, through which the oppressed peasant had expressed his yearning for art and kept up his spirit, but there was almost a total lack of any literary tradition. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in which the anti-Reformation mercilessly crushed every atom of spiritual freedom and darkness only prevailed in Austria, offered no favourable ground for literary efforts, least of all for those of the heretic Czechs.

But even during the earlier periods of Czech history literature never rose to any great achievements in poetry to which regenerated Bohemia could have looked for inspiration. Czech genius in the past never followed very high æsthetic ideals, being too much absorbed in religious speculation. It is true that the Reformation did not everywhere stamp out all possibilities for poetry. Lutheranism through its chivalrous spirit and triumphant buoyancy stimulated creative forces in German literature, and similarly in England Protestantism in no way hindered the development of literary efforts during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, until it was arrested by Puritanism. The Czech Reformation had a different character. The greatness of Hus and Chelčický lay in the moral revolution which they brought about against the prevailing mediæval universalism through their demand that people should not only talk and die, but also live as Christians. They saw the incon-

gruity between the pagan life of their contemporaries, between the epicurean lives of Christians and the ideals of Christianity. This incongruity they tried to solve through a return to primitive Christianity. They had a burning hatred of classic culture and philosophy, and desired nothing but to live according to the principles of Jesus Christ. For the Bohemian Brethren, who included all the best people of Bohemia, there were no more problems to be solved once this incongruity was set right. The limited outlook of their philosophy led them to passivity, quietism, and an ascetic self-sacrifice to God. Life to these puritans was not a struggle but only a suffering—a trial for the next world. Art, however, can only live where life is felt as a struggle or a joy, where there is unrest and emotion, and not where all thoughts are directed towards an inhuman repression of the senses by constant religious meditations on the next world.

The incongruity between life and creed, this dualism of ethics which the Bohemian Brethren fought against, formed, in fact, a deep source of poetry in France, Italy, and Spain. It permitted poets to enjoy with their senses all the pleasures of life before turning their thoughts towards God. This was the foundation of Catholic Western romanticism, which extended its influence even into the nineteenth century. The reaction against the universal political power and authority of the Roman Catholic Church was also a reaction against this dualism. Its first signs were in the Renaissance and humanistic movements, and its final expression was the Reformation. Renaissance poets sought inspiration in classic ideals, but in reality they remained good Christians and accepted the classic ideals only superficially. They continued to be haunted by fears of the next world and to hope for a Christian death. In France and Italy Catholicism soon succumbed to the laxity of what Pascal calls "the culture of paganism." In England and in Germany the influence of the Renaissance movement was not really felt till the eighteenth century. Its enemy was the Reformation, which stood for puritanism. But even the Reformation did not quite stamp out this Catholic dualism. Milton often draws inspiration from sources which he ought to abhor as a strict puritan. The incongruity between

melancholy dissipation and hopes for a Christian death has finally been conquered by Shelley, the great poet of life who sought happiness in harmony, not in discord. His last work, *The Triumph of Life*, is a hymn of the modern creed, rejecting asceticism. Neither Shelley nor Goethe needed the presence of death to realize the beauties of life, and to find happiness in art without fear that this would cause any harm to their souls.

The modern romantic movement marks a reaction against the Renaissance movement which culminated in the classicism and rationalism of the eighteenth century. If the French Revolution, proclaiming freedom and equality, marks an end of mediæval theocracy in politics, the modern romantic movement is a reaction against dry reason, aristocratic and inhuman formalism in poetry. It enriched art by bringing in sound, fresh ideas through an appeal to a keener imagination and sensitiveness, unbound passion, love of nature and of the common people. The victory of the lyric element in poetry, represented in England by Burns, Keats, and Shelley, brought freedom of form and a new wealth of poetic language. It was an imposing, almost revolutionary, effort for a new meaning of life as opposed to the stiff and limited rationalism of the eighteenth century. Against dry reason, sentimental affectation, frivolity, and cynicism Rousseau appealed to instinct and pure sentiment, and dreamt of a return to primitive life.

Modern romanticism produced several really great poets, but, on the other hand, it concealed many dangers for weaker spirits. In its struggle against rationalism it had often recourse to the Middle Ages, and thus sometimes, especially in Germany, it had a reactionary rather than a revolutionary tendency. Another danger lay in its primitivism, which with weaker poets easily degenerated into boring descriptiveness of nature or into an exaggerated self-consciousness and morbid misanthropy, or into shallow and even perverse sentimentality. Russian literature, at least (Puškin, Turgenëv, Gončarov), accepted romanticism critically. Tolstoy and Dostoievsky were against romantic individualism and sentimentality, against its lax spirit of morals and its sensualism. Tolstoy had recourse to

Christian primitivity, Dostoievsky to the laws of Christian love and brotherhood.

Neither the Catholic chivalrous poetry nor the Renaissance movement had any deeper influence or repercussion in Bohemia before the end of her independence. Humanism produced a culture of Latin and Greek philology, but the greatest Renaissance poets, Petrarca, Ariosto, Tasso, Rabelais, and Montaigne, did not inspire the Czechs until the end of the nineteenth century (Vrchlický). When rationalism was at its best in Germany at the end of the eighteenth century and produced the Weimar classics, Bohemia produced only poor imitations of the poetry of the pre-Lessing period. Later, Jungmann professed the rationalism of Voltaire and Lessing, but his literary merit, which lies chiefly in his translations of Chateaubriand's *Atala* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*, was more of a philological than of a strictly literary value. His translations served as a means for the revival of Czech as a literary language. It is only natural that also the influence of modern romanticism, and especially of Byronism, which appears again and again throughout the nineteenth century in Mácha, Hálek, and Svatopluk Čech, was mostly superficial and consisted more in the imitation of form than in spirit. Romanticism could not be felt as deeply as elsewhere, because in Bohemia it had no Renaissance movement to revolt against and no tradition to build upon. It is characteristic that the first Czech regenerators were scientists (Dobrovský, Šafařík, Palacký), and Mickiewicz was right when he called the Czechs of those days a nation of savants, not of poets. Czech literature developed only gradually, and acquired a high artistic standard only at the end of the nineteenth century. During the whole first half of the nineteenth century Czech poetry lay under the spell of romanticism and produced comparatively little of permanent value. It lacked and dreaded that enthusiasm, that unbridled imagination, lofty irony, and lyric emotionalism which constituted the magnetic charm of Western romanticism. It often lacked also in artistic beauty and in wealth and diversity of ideas, and adhered generally to those tendencies which it considered useful for patriotic propaganda, for the pro-

motion of the culture of the language and of nationalism. The chief ideas of Czech romanticism were: nationalism, pan-Slavism, Old Slav mythology, language and folk-lore culture. The greatest talents which it produced were Mácha, Erben, and Čelakovský.

Poets of the Czech Regeneration.

The most popular, though the weakest of the poets of this period was the Slovak **Jan Kollár** (1793-1852). It was aptly said about him that he was too much of a philologist to be a good poet and too much of a poet to be a good philologist. His chief work, *Slávy Dcera* (*Sláva's Daughter*), is a quaint mixture of the erotic with the pan-Slav idea. The woman whom he loved and married is personified as the daughter of Sláva, the goddess of all Slavs. The past of the ancient Slavs, especially of those of the Elbe, is described with minute archæological details which make the work heavy and monotonous. It is clear that Kollár was impressed by Petrarca and by Byron's *Childe Harold*, but he copied only the form, the outward mask and attitude, of Byron, while the spirit of his romanticism remained a closed book to him. It is a pathetic and naïve conglomeration of abstract archæology and pan-Slav idealism. To-day we hardly can understand how it could have provoked the enthusiasm of his generation. Added to the weakness of the contents, the Latin hexameter employed, which was already condemned by Dobrovský as being completely unsuitable for the accent of the Czech language, makes the work even more dry and indigestible. The opening stanza deplores the fate of the Slavs of the Elbe in the following words:—

Here lies the country, alas, 'fore my eyes that in tears are o'er-flowing,

Once 'twas the cradle, but now—now 'tis the tomb of my race.
Check thou thy steps, for the places are sacred wherever thou turnest.

Son of the Tatra arise, cast to the heavens thy gaze,
Or to the mighty old oak, that stands there yonder, incline thee,
'Gainst the treacherous time holding its own till to-day.

(Translated by PAUL SELVER.)

It is not surprising that later poetry found no inspiration in Kollár's example, which from the artistic point of view was doomed to oblivion. On the other hand, a more fruitful ground was found in Bohemia by romanticism in its ethnological aspect. The interest in folk-poetry originated in England, where under Addison's influence Bishop Thomas Percy published a collection of English and Scottish ballads in 1765 under the title of *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. The study of folk-lore which romanticism promoted found a ready echo in Germany, where Herder, the brothers Grimm, Brentano, and von Arnim began to collect folk-songs, stories, and ballads. The influence of this movement is marked also in Robert Burns, Goethe, Uhland, Heine, and many other poets of this period. In Bohemia a great deal of study was devoted to the collection of folk-songs, ballads, and proverbs from the commencement of the regeneration, especially by Šafařík, Kollár, Sušil, Erben, and Čelakovský. The latter two were inspired by these studies to a production of successful imitations and original works in folk-lore style, many of which constitute the only classical gems of the poetry of this period. Of the two Čelakovský, though not as original as Erben, showed a greater sense for the lyric element, while Erben's ballads are almost purely epic. Both were influenced by the philosophy of Rousseau, Herder, and Goethe.

F. J. Čelakovský (1799-1852) is an extremely sympathetic personality. Well versed in Slav literature, as well as in German classic and romantic poetry, Čelakovský devoted his whole life to the study of Slav folk-lore. He suffered a great deal from poverty, having had to earn his living first as a tutor in aristocratic families, then as the editor of the official *Prague Gazette* and of the *Česká Včela* (*Czech Bee*). In 1835 he had to resign this position owing to the intrigues of his personal enemies, and his existence was uncertain until in 1842 he became Professor of Slav Studies in Breslau and finally at the Prague University (1849). His health was by then, however, so undermined through all the hardships of his life that he died soon afterwards. As a character, Čelakovský possessed a rare balance and broadness of mind. He had

something of Goethe's grace, lucidity and wit, and to Goethe he was also in no small measure indebted for his outlook on life. His literary ground was limited, but he mastered his subject well. He had a great command of style and language and wrote a firm and easy verse, full of sonority, wit, and melody, for which we would in vain look in any of his contemporaries. The only criticism which might be brought to weigh against his work is that it lacked in originality of subject-matter—all his works being but reflections of folk-poetry. His genius, though lyrical in temperament, was inspired more by æsthetic reasoning than by the direct impulse of his spirit. Besides his collections of Slav folk-songs (1827) and of Slav proverbs (1852), Čelakovský bequeathed as his best works *Echoes of Russian Songs* (1829), *Echoes of Czech Songs* (1839), and *The Rose of a Hundred Leaves* (1829). The Russian echoes, though only imitations of Russian heroic ballads (*byliny*), are original in artistic conception and combine well the epic, heroic spirit with a romantic sense for the beauties of nature and for the erotic. More lyrical still than the *Russian Echoes* are the *Czech Echoes*, which express admirably the nature of the Czech peasant, playful, ironic and excitable, and again graceful and possessing deep popular wisdom. A classical example of his genius is his poem *Toman and the Wood-nymph*, a story of a demoniac, passionate love in romantic wood surroundings. In addition to the above-mentioned works Čelakovský translated from Sir Walter Scott, Herder, Goethe, and Krasiński. Through the harmony of his life-conquering spirit, his sense for a brilliant and heroic grandeur of effect, and his command of diverse styles, well suited to the wisdom and wit of the folk-ballad, he brought to perfection the folk-song form and must be ranged among the classics of Czech poetry. As a protagonist of perfect form and of wealth of contents he was naturally an opponent of everything superficial, imperfect, pathetic, abstract and insincere, and for this reason he was also opposed to Kollár and Mácha.

K. J. Erben (1811–1870) also devoted himself to the study of folk-lore and knew thoroughly Slav sagas, songs, ballads, and proverbs. His greatest work is the *Kytice*, a

collection of folk-ballads which earned him the fame of the classical Czech ballad-writer. Though his ballads are based also on folk-poetry, they are much more original in subject than those of Čelakovský. Erben succeeded in interpreting through his work those epic and psychological elements of folk-poetry which are the most characteristic of the various Slav races. His ballads, taken mostly from mythology, show man in a dramatic moral struggle with supernatural phenomena, and usually end harmoniously with the victory of man by the aid of a firm faith in all that is good. As regards form, they are written in a simple, primitivist style which most aptly reflects the spirit of folk-poetry. Through this simplicity Erben succeeds in producing wonderful effects in the description of characters and of general atmosphere, and adds thereby to the dramatic flow of the story. Erben has, indeed, become the teacher of the new generation of Hálek, Neruda, and Heyduk, to say nothing of Vrchlický, but he alone remained the master of the true folk-ballad style. The artistic defect of his work lies in the lack of any lyric element. His poems are the work of a scientific mind, transplanting successfully the finished form of the Scottish ballad into Bohemia with the use of native themes.

A personality which stands quite apart in Czech literature is **Karel Hynek Mácha** (1810-1836), the only truly lyric poet of this period. Unfortunately he lived in an age when Czech literature was in its infancy, and he remained, therefore, alone, misunderstood, and boycotted by his contemporaries. He was also handicapped by his youth, for he died prematurely before his great talent could ripen. But though he did not digest and understand romanticism in its full scope, retaining only its negative, melancholy pessimism, Mácha remained the one Czech poet on whom Byronism had more than a superficial influence. His greatest and almost only work, called *May*, which made him famous and dear also to later generations, contains delicious lyric passages, despite a good deal of fantastic and pathetic elements in the story itself. The poem begins :—

'Twas late in the evening, the first of May,
The first of May, the time of love,
Of love alone sang ev'ry dove.

The description of the beauties of nature, with doves, roses, nightingales, pale moonlight, and other romantic attributes, is followed by a contrasting tragedy of the desperate feelings of a girl waiting in vain for her beloved who lies in prison awaiting execution for having murdered his own father out of jealousy. Then follow the meditations of the prisoner about after-death life, about the meaning of life and the vanity of everything on this earth. His soul is full of melancholy, yearning, and discontent at the tragedy of the fate of a man condemned by society to perdition because he violated the existing order under the influence of excessive love and jealousy. The epilogue is a fascinating elegy of lost youth, a foreboding of the poet's own coming death.

Despite all the imperfections of this work—its pessimism, scepticism, pathos, and weak story—its merits are many. It contains places which are evidently characterized by that inspiration, depth, and sincerity of feeling which are only given to true poets. In the lyrical parts Mácha was the first to use to the full advantage of its wealth of colour and sonority the Czech language in harmony with the spirit of the ideas expressed. He was the first, and for a long time the only, Czech poet who dared to express his personal feelings directly and sincerely to the horror of his simple-minded patriotic contemporaries, who saw in him a revolutionary. He was the first who “had the courage to look straight in the face of that which is called nought,” and beneath all the pathetic imperfections we discover in him that strong yearning for truth in philosophic thought and sentiment which later characterized the greatest Czech poets Neruda, Vrchlický, Machar, Bezruč, Sova, and Březina.

First Attempts in Prose.

If the beginnings in poetry were difficult, attempts at original prose were even more so. Even in later Czech fiction we find seldom great originality or that high standard which is characteristic of Czech poetry. Czech novelists limited themselves mostly either to realistic pictures from the life of the peasants, or to historical subjects, without attempting to solve any great human problems and usually also without striving for that depth of thought and psycho-

logy for which the Scandinavian and Russian literature is famous. Nevertheless, we find in later Czech literature the influence of these as well as of the French literature. The prose of the first half of the nineteenth century, however, is such poor reading-matter, consisting chiefly of sentimental patriotic stories, that we do not propose to deal with it.

An honourable exception is the work of **Božena Němcová** (1820-1862), who successfully fulfilled in prose those ideals which guided Erben and Čelakovský in poetry. It was this intelligent warm-hearted woman who first turned her attention to the life of the peasant. Let it be said at once that women occupy a very prominent position in Czech literature, and we shall later have the opportunity of speaking about the service rendered by K. Světlá, Viková-Kunětická, G. Preissová, and R. Svobodová to the development of the Czech novel.

The life of Němcová was very sad. She married at the age of seventeen an official fifteen years older than herself, who showed no understanding for her work and often treated her brutally out of jealousy for her friendship with various fellow-writers. She was always suffering in health, and in addition to the care of her five children she had later practically to provide for her own living, because her husband was pensioned in 1853 in consequence of a groundless denunciation, but in reality on account of her purely non-political writings. Němcová died an old woman at the age of forty-two before her talent could develop sufficiently to make her into a truly great novelist. Nevertheless, the work she left is of sufficient literary value to assure her immortality.

Her patriotism and literary interest were aroused by the dramatic writings of Josef Kajetán Tyl, and by her contact with Czech literary circles generally during her stay in Prague in 1842-1845. Her chief interest centred in folklore, which she studied zealously wherever she came: in her own native district in North-Eastern Bohemia, in South-Western Bohemia and in Slovakia. Perhaps of the greatest value are her charming fairy-tales, adapted mostly from original tales heard from the peasants. She wrote also many stories from the life of peasants, the greatest and

most popular of them being *The Grandmother*, translated also into English, French, German, Rumanian, and other languages. *The Grandmother* is really a biography of Nĕmcová's own grandmother, founded on recollections from her early youth. It is a charming picture of an old woman whose only mission in life is to be kind to others, and it contains also a wealth of picturesque descriptions of local customs. Her description of characters and her naïve romanticism remind us of Charles Dickens, but her rendering of the peasant's relation to nature is obviously influenced by Rousseau's ideas. It is a book full of lofty idealism, simplicity of heart, light humour, and poetry. Nĕmcová's impressions, her ethnographic studies, her romantic descriptions of nature, and her understanding of the human heart are well combined in this simple, yet dramatic story. Her talent was limited, but fortunately she never overstepped her limitations. Her work is the work of a romantic, erotic soul, displaying tender womanly tact and intuition, simple and charming, and entirely free from sophistry or false intellectualism.

The decade from 1845 to 1855 meant a period of slumber in prose as in poetry. The Young German movement and Hegelian Radicalism in Germany had only a slight repercussion in Bohemia, where romanticism and Byronism died hard. It prepared the ground for the Liberal and Democratic movement personified in Havlíček. A new critical current began to be felt in philosophic scepticism and realism in opposition to romanticism and the period of slumber, with the advent of Havlíček and Neruda. The same revolution which in political ideas created Havlíček was accomplished in poetry by Neruda, whose importance greatly outweighs the literary value of his more popular contemporary, Hálek. The second half of the nineteenth century, although often showing cosmopolitan tendencies, retains the nationalistic idea and love of folklore of the romantic period, while realism purifies and uplifts Czech poetry and contributes fresh ideas. Instead of a blindly sentimental culture of the erotic, Czech literature proclaims the emancipation of women; instead of uncritical patriotism it adopts a critical attitude towards national as

well as religious and social questions. Neruda, Hálek, Svatopluk Čech, and Vrchlický bring gradually to perfection excellence of form. The struggle of cosmopolitan with national tendencies enriches poetry both in form and in contents, although cosmopolitanism had also many detrimental effects inasmuch as it brought too many foreign influences to weigh against the development of a sufficiently original Czech literature. Its chief merit lies in the fact that through the translations of the most important works of English, French, Italian, German, Scandinavian, and Russian literatures it widened the outlook of the reading public and filled to a large extent the gap in literature felt through the lack of literary tradition.

The " May " Generation.

The period between the publication of the programme of the rising literary generation in 1854 and Hálek's death belonged to the *May* generation, so called after the literary review *May*. The chief personalities of this period were Hálek and Neruda, poets of vastly different talent and temperament. The poets of this period generally labour under the influence of Heine and of the Young German movement, and lay the foundations of modern Czech poetry which followed. The *May* generation recognized Erben as its teacher, but it lay also under the spell of individualism and of the sentimental lyric Byronism of Mácha, whom it tried to vindicate. Rational scepticism, irony, and realistic tendencies also begin to gain ground.

Vítězslav Hálek (1835-1874) was considered a great genius by his contemporaries, and yet to-day he is, like Kollár, rightly relegated to oblivion. The myth of Hálek's greatness was finally and definitely disposed of by Machar in 1894. From a student of philosophy Hálek became a poet and later a journalist as a contributor to the newly founded *Národní Listy*. Through the marriage with a rich woman he soon acquired a wide circle of friends in society, which, together with the pleasing light sentimentality of his poems, assured him a quick rise to fame and popularity. This circumstance undoubtedly did him more harm than good, because it seduced him to attempt such tasks for

which his manifold, yet second-rate talent did not suffice. His first work was a collection of ballads in the style of Erben's *Kytice*. Then followed various epic poems on exotic themes which are no more than slavish imitations of Byron in form, and lack in psychology and sincerity of feeling. His *Alfred* is, indeed, nothing but a caricature of Mácha's *May*. His most popular work is a collection of lyric poems called *The Evening Songs*, clearly reflecting Heine's poetry, but lacking Heine's sense of humour. They are sugary, monotonous examples of lyric romanticism. For instance :—

The trees are rustling softly. Through
 The leaves scarce moves a breeze.
 The birds in blissful dreams repose
 So silent and at ease.
 Many a star in heaven appears,
 Around it all is so free :
 But in my bosom there is grief,
 In my heart is misery.
 Upon the petals of the flowers
 The dew in splendour lies.
 O God, and even so the dew
 Wells up into my eyes.

(Translated by PAUL SELVER.)

The lack of self-criticism, erudition, and originality is especially obvious in his epic poems, which are but fantastic plays of unreal phantoms and by far do not reach the heights of a Puškin or a Mickiewicz, to whom Hálek's poems have been compared. They have no depth and little charm. The naïveté of the descriptions of nature surpasses even Mácha's simplicity and often borders on the comic. As an example of how his powers fell short of his examples we may quote his apostrophe of liberty in the poem "Goar" :—

O freedom ! Thou golden gift of nations
 By man for ages trodden down and torn,
 Conceived in hideous pain and lamentations,
 To be but foully murdered, tho' scarce born,
 Be welcome as a ray in thickest fog,
 Thou lovely rose, flower of consolations,
 Thy roots are in man's long-past hopeless sighs,
 Thy dew—the bitter tear-drops in his eyes.

And compare this paraphrase of Byron with the inspiring text of the original :—

Yet Freedom ! Yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
Streams like the thunderstorm against the wind.
Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
The loudest still the tempest leaves behind.
Thy tree has lost its blossoms, and the rind,
Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
But the sap lasts—and still the seed we find
Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North.
So shall a better Spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

Hálek wrote also several dramas in which he tried to imitate Shakespeare. He succeeded in imitating his weak points, but his philosophy, wit, and charm eluded him. Hálek's dramas lack in dramatic climax, and the whole fabric is superficial, improvised, and insincere. His *dramatis personæ* are unreal, pathetic talkers. Hálek's dramas have, therefore, hardly survived his own lifetime. Somewhat better are Hálek's last works, consisting of lyric poetry and short stories.

How different, on the other hand, were the life and work of Neruda. Hálek's life was happy and easy, his success and popularity complete. Neruda was born in poverty, never found happiness in love, lived in continuous struggle and suffering, misunderstood and despised by his contemporaries, and died in poverty after a long and painful illness which for years confined him to bed. His fate presents in many respects a parallel to Smetana's. Both Neruda and Smetana earned the full recognition of their nation only long after their death—Smetana as the founder of Czech opera, Neruda as the founder of modern Czech poetry. And although to a foreign observer their merits might seem overrated, for it is little short of heresy to criticize one or the other to a Czech of to-day, the fact remains that without Smetana the development of Czech music had been as unthinkable as the development of Czech poetry without Neruda. Despite their defects, or rather their more local, national importance, both of them have created works of classic, permanent values, and in their works the Czech spirit for the first time found its true, original expression.

Like Hálek, **Jan Neruda** (1834-1891) was influenced by Heine and the Young German movement. But if Hálek lacked in self-criticism, Neruda suffered rather from too great a self-consciousness. Although they both were friends and contemporaries, they had few things in common. Hálek's sentimental romanticism, in fact, belonged to the past, while Neruda's realism and his outlook on life belonged to the future. In his character Neruda was, especially in his early life, a sceptic and a pessimist, reserved and sensitive, proud, self-critical, with a cold reason, yet not without a warm heart. From the cosmopolitanism of his early works he soon returned to nationalism in an effort for the creation of a nationally original style, while remaining a pronounced enemy of Jingoism. A born sceptic and a man of intellect, Neruda, like Havlíček, denounced patriotic sentimentality and demanded that patriotism should be conscious and reasonable, not blind.

In the expression of his own personal feelings he was, like Smetana, very shy and discreet. Only his first and his last poems are purely lyrical and personal. His other works conceal his personal feelings in poems written with a lofty idealism and a broad, humanitarian outlook, *sub specie æternitatis*. None the less, all his poems bear the mark of his strong and original personality, and tell us more about his soul than had he written volumes about himself.

Neruda was, especially in his prose, a humorist, but not a satirist. Being a proletarian, he wrote stories which constitute a veiled protest against the existing social order, but without any contempt, envy, or hatred of the upper classes. His prose consists mostly of feuilletons written for the *Národní Listy*, of which he wrote over two thousand. Perhaps the most characteristic and best known are the stories about his native Malá Strana—a quaint old quarter in Prague, just below the Castle of Hradčany. These stories are short realistic sketches of the common people, and their compassionate humour often reminds us of Čechov. They contain many allusions to his own life, and altogether represent a tribute paid to the surroundings in which he was born and in which he led a suffering, yet often happy life. His best prose works, however, are considered to be the

impressions of his travels in France, Germany, Egypt, and Palestine, full of picturesque descriptions and the keen perspicacity of a modern European. In all his stories Neruda likes to exaggerate and to caricature. The general tendency of his writings shows him to be a democrat and a liberal both in politics and in religion. His later prose works unfortunately show a growing incongruity and a distinct weakening of wit.

Neruda's prose is of a far smaller artistic and human value than his poetry. Through his prose works he paid a heavy penalty to the belated influence of the Young German movement in Bohemia, from which his poetry is almost free. The Young German movement was meant as a revolution against the ideas of classicism and romanticism. By trying to replace these ideas with new ones in the sense of Strauss and Feuerbach philosophy, it fell into the abyss of shallow cosmopolitanism and humanism. After Byronism it became the fashion of the day in Bohemia, and Neruda, Hálek, and K. Světlá often sought in it their ideals. Neruda was stimulated by it to the search of an enriched content, and a reflection of its influence is also in his attempt to refresh poetry by the use of the living language as spoken in the street. But the fallacy of the movement lay in its superficiality. Literature was to be but an improvisation of the impressions of the moment without regard to beauty of style, rhythm, and organic construction, without which genuine poetry cannot exist. Heine himself, therefore, protested to be identified with the Young German movement, and Neruda discovered its dangers in time. His return to the folk-song form and to the ballad in the footsteps of Erben obviously was a step in the opposite direction from the Young Germans, who distrusted and scorned folk-lore study.

Neruda wrote six volumes of poems. The first book, called *Cemetery Blossoms* (1857), contains the confessions of his pessimistic youth and reminds us of Mácha. The verse is as yet rough but vigorous. The poet has obviously created it with difficulty, but its sincerity and depth of feeling revealed the future master, and at any rate did not merit the scorn of the critics of the day which it received,

and which made him feel as one "buried alive." The two books of verses which followed, containing poems written between 1860 and 1867, are ballads and legends, and are inspired by Neruda's admiration of Erben and Heine, from whose works they differ by a broader humanitarian outlook. If Heine was foremost an artist and then a man, Neruda strove above all to be human, and artistic aims were a secondary consideration to him. In these two works Neruda found for the first time his own self. Their original style, concise yet full of youthful *joie de vivre*, their rhythmic melody and the intensity of feeling of their contents, make them living books even to-day. In all his suffering Neruda apparently lived an intense spiritual life, and searched in higher ideals of art for a balance of mind and inner harmony.

His following book, *The Cosmic Songs* (1878), is a further proof of his search in the mysteries of the universe for a liberation from the annoying pettiness of this world. There is a joyous outcry for the conquest of the universe in these charming poems, some of which are written in the simple, concise, and witty folk-song style, others in a rich, harmonious verse. His keen astronomic phantasy makes him compare human life with cosmic life, only seldom contrasting the two. Every word is in its place, nothing is false or superficial. His own personality remains in the background: art and poetry are something holy to him which does not allow profanation. The only drawback of the *Cosmic Songs* is a certain incongruity of ideas and too much anthropomorphism.

His best work is considered to be a volume of *Ballads and Romances*, written in 1883, in which his intellectual positivism finally overcomes his pessimism. His ballads, founded mostly on Czech motives, are superior ethically and philosophically to those of Erben. A warm, human feeling pervades them, together with a delicate touch of humour, so that the primitivist folk-ballad becomes, in the interpretation of this cultured European, a higher work of art with a humanitarian tendency. Erben's simple morality becomes in Neruda a boisterous outcry against the existing social order, as well as a joyous hymn to the Almighty, with a deep philosophic meaning throughout. The epic and the

lyric elements are happily combined in a work full of grandeur, rhythm, and decorative charm. It is a refuge of the poet from empty liberalism and rationalism to the world of miracles. The motive of the pure, simple, and noble soul of a child comes up again and again, pointing out the road of salvation for sophisticated mankind. Jesus does not appear as a martyr or as a fighting revolutionary, but as a prophet full of wisdom and pure humour, enveloping the world with its shining splendour. Neruda pictures Jesus either as the loving and beloved Saviour, or as a charming, kind-hearted bambino.

The forebodings of his long illness are contained in *The Simple Motives* (1888), in which Neruda embodied the yearnings, erotic dreams, and scepticism of his second youth. They are a description of the four seasons in nature which serve him to express symbolically the experience of his life. Sceptic Spring disbelieves that snow will ever disappear and struggles hard for supremacy. Hot, erotic Summer follows triumphant in light and happiness, but melancholy Autumn intervenes and the year ends in cold Winter, with its long sleepless nights, foreboding the coming death. Neruda's last book of poems, *The Friday Songs* (1890) is again, as his first work, purely lyrical. It contains religious reminiscences, elegies of personal sufferings, pathetic hymns, and prayers of an almost mystic national Messianism.

If we examine wherein lies the Czech character of Neruda's work, we shall find it in his humanitarian, liberal patriotism, in his sense of humour and love of the truth, in the simplicity and conciseness of language, using with special effect Slav diminutives, and finally in his depth of feeling combined with fine intellectualism. It seems a pity that almost nothing of this our great classic, has as yet been translated into English.

When speaking of Czech poetry of this period, we must add two more names to those of Hálek and Neruda, namely, those of Heyduk and Světlá. Adolf **Heyduk** (1835-1923) was a happy son of nature, and his poetic improvisations are in many ways related to Hálek's lyric poetry. He had nothing of the solitary, cultured pessimism of Neruda.

Heyduk's value in literature, however, is greater than Hálek's, because Heyduk is more sincere and original. The best of the numerous poems that Heyduk wrote are his lyric songs on romantic love and nature themes, reflecting the folk-poetry of Slovakia and of Šumava (the Bohemian Forest). Heyduk's epic works do not attain a high artistic level, and often suffer from a too pronounced nationalistic tendency.

The greatest novelist of this period was again a woman, Karolina **Světlá** (1830-1899), who was attracted by the work and personality of George Sand. George Sand herself took great interest in Bohemia, and borrowed a great deal of local colour from Bohemia for her novels *Consuelo* and *The Countess of Rudolfstadt*. Světlá looked to George Sand for the psychology of her woman types. She had more pathos and a greater ambition than Němcová, but her real talents were unequal to the task. Her early novels show the soul of women who have to struggle against social prejudices. Some of her novels, rather phantastic in conception, show a patriotic tendency and deal with reminiscences of her family and with the Czech regeneration. Her later novels are of greater literary value, and aspire at tragic stories with strong moral ideals behind them. The last period of her production is tainted with undue patriotic tendency at the expense of a truly human outlook on life and its problems. Her whole work, which consists of thirty large volumes, appears rather out of date to-day and does not compare with the artistic standard of Němcová's work. Her women, fighting for new ideas, are too schematic and unreal, her stories lack in organic construction and inspiration, and her novels, therefore, strike us as being grey and monotonous.

The cosmopolitan tendency which manifested itself so strongly later in Zeyer, Sládek, and Vrchlický, had an important influence already on the generation of Hálek and Neruda. Neruda himself translated from Scandinavian, Hungarian, and French (Victor Hugo), P. Durdík translated Byron's *Cain*, P. Sobotka translated Tennyson and Longfellow, and various translations appeared also from Russian (Puškin, Lermontov, Nekrasov, Rylejev, Kolcov, etc.), and from Polish (Slowacki).

A few words have to be added about the progress of Czech drama. The interest in theatricals, and especially in opera, has always been keen in Bohemia. Very important is the tradition of Shakespeare, whose dramas are still on the permanent repertoire of the Czech theatres of to-day. As early as 1786 Czech theatrical performances were given in the wooden theatre called "Bouda" (Booth), when *Macbeth* was played for the first time in Czech in the translation from German of K. H. Thám. Later on, Czech actors were allowed occasionally to give matinees in the old Theatre of the Estates, where Mozart's *Don Juan*, composed in Prague, had its first performance. The first translation of Shakespeare from the original (*Macbeth*) was made by J. J. Kolár in 1839, and other translations soon followed, so that the Society *Matice Česká* could, in 1872, present the Czech public with a complete translation of all Shakespeare's plays. It was the work of J. J. Kolár, J. Čejka, F. Doucha, L. Čelkakovský, and J. Malý. These translations contained, however, many imperfections, and the task of revising them or rather of translating Shakespeare afresh, fell to J. V. Sládek, who translated altogether thirty-one plays. The work of this poet, who belonged to the generation which came after Neruda and who had a good knowledge of English, having lived for some time in the United States, was most successful, and reproduces well the spirit as well as the melody of Shakespeare's verse.

The Czech theatre had meanwhile made great progress. In 1862 a provisional theatre was built in which within twenty years of its existence Shakespeare has been produced more than three hundred times. In 1883 at last was opened the present theatre and opera, the *National Theatre*. On this occasion the great Czech political leader Rieger rightly observed: "Our National Theatre is not like other theatres. It was built from voluntary contributions made with unheard-of sacrifices. Whenever you touch it you touch the sacrifice of poor widows and poor labourers who may not be able even to see it in their lifetimes, because they have not sufficient means to come so far to see it." The National Theatre, which has become a true temple of art, is in itself a wonderful work of the best Czech architects,

sculptors, and painters, and proudly boasts that it was built by "the Nation for itself." It became not only the home of fine recreation, but also an instrument of artistic education, for it uplifted the artistic sense of the Czech people, who affectionately call it "The Golden Temple."

The "Lumír" Generation.

The task of the generation which under more auspicious circumstances followed in the footsteps of Hálek and Neruda was equally grateful and difficult. It meant nothing less than the creation of modern Czech poetry which could favourably compare with the poetry of other nations with a far older tradition. The cosmopolitan tendency gained ascendancy in the artistic group gathered round the review *Lumír*, and led by Vrchlický, Sládek, and Zeyer. Old patriotic romanticism and pan-Slavistic Byronism culminates and dies with Svatopluk Čech, who brings to perfection the epic form of poetry. Only later on a new school arises as a reaction against both the cosmopolitan and the nationalist schools in the realistic movement which proclaims modern social and ethical ideals in poetry.

Svatopluk Čech (1846-1908), who stood at the head of the nationalist school, has been aptly called the last poet of the regeneration period. His pan-Slav ideas and lofty patriotism remind us of Kollár, and his epic poems are the realization of the ideals for which Hálek in vain strove. There is an obvious continuity between the work of Čech, a pupil of Russian and Polish Byronism, and the preceding Czech romantics. As regards form, Čech is related to Vrchlický, because they both are verbalists. But while Čech lays stress on poetic description and his form becomes schematic, Vrchlický loves rhetoric contrast and variety of form. Nevertheless, technically Čech is superior not only to Hálek, but even to Neruda.

From the beginning Svatopluk Čech was a master of the small ballad form, in which we perceive the continuation of Hálek's Byronic tradition. Later on Čech indulged in writing long epic poems mostly from Czech (Hussite) his-

tory, the best of them being *The Adamites*, *Europe*, and *Václav z Michalovic*. His poems are carefully worked out in detail, their verse is solid and conscientious, their spirit simple and warm-hearted. Problems are solved rhetorically rather than philosophically or psychologically. Thus, for instance, Čech solves the Slav problem by a reconciliation of Poles and Russians, and, similarly, all other conflicts end in an optimistic conclusion, usually in a grand hymn on humanitarian, pan-Slav, or democratic ideals. The poems contain scenes calculated at dramatic effect, but they suffer from too detailed descriptions. The poet loves to paint his pictures of scenery and to describe everything very minutely, and seldom only do we find any attempt at psychology, because his *dramatis personæ* are usually symbolic, whereby the whole story acquires an abstract, unreal character; pan-Slav or patriotic tendency prevails in *Europe*, *Slavia*, *Lešetinský Kovář* (*The Blacksmith of Lešetice*), *Žižka*, and *Václav z Michalovic*. On the other hand, Čech wrote also idyllic stories, *Under the Linden-tree*, and *Hanuman*, a light story about a monkey. His sympathies for the oppressed are embodied in the symbolic *Songs of a Slave*, perhaps his most inspired work, which became equally popular among the working classes as among the nationalists. The poet's religious ideals are contained in his *Prayers to the Unknown*.

Besides the above poems Svatopluk Čech wrote also a number of charming stories, full of romance, satire, and wit. The most popular are his phantastic *Excursions of Mr. Brouček to the Moon*, in which Čech drew a caricature of a Prague bourgeois.

To the romantic school belonged also Eliška Krásnohorská, who held similar ideas to K. Světlá, and wrote chiefly lyric poetry. Her literary merit lies chiefly in her translations of Byron, Puškin, and Mickiewicz.

Much more important for the development of Czech poetry than Svatopluk Čech was the rise of the cosmopolitan school, gathered round the review *Lumír* and represented by Sládek, Zeyer, and Vrchlický, of which Sládek alone could claim some continuity with past tradition, especially with Neruda.

J. V. **Sládek** (1845-1912) lived for some time in America, and his good knowledge of English literature left clear traces in his work. His poetry developed, as in the case of Neruda, from melancholy to pan-human lyricism. His style was simple, manly, and concise. His greatest merit lies in his original translations from Robert Burns, Longfellow, T. Coleridge, and Shakespeare, as well as from Swedish and Polish authors.

Quite an exceptional position, not only in Czech but in European literature, is occupied by Julius **Zeyer** (1841-1901). Outwardly he represents ideas similar to those of Vrchlický. Both Zeyer and Vrchlický drew inspiration from French and Italian sources, both could boast of great erudition and of a keen sense for the assimilation of foreign ideas. Their work is quite a new leaf in Czech literature, which had hitherto, with the exception of Mácha and the early works of Neruda, been devoted mainly to nationalism. The *raison d'être* of the cosmopolitan school lay in the absence of Czech Renaissance literature, which it sought to rectify. Its tendency was still favourable to romanticism in its hostility to realism and naturalism, but it excluded all political or nationalist tendency from poetry and laid chief stress on the beauty of the word and form. It enriched the poetic language and form in a way undreamt of before with a great ability of technique and a wide imagination, but its dependence on foreign examples resulted in a certain lack of unity, depth, and originality of ideas—in short, in eclecticism. Of the two poets Zeyer was more subjective and sensitive, Vrchlický stronger in brain-power and in abstract thinking. Both were sensuous poets of nature and of reflective philosophy. Vrchlický has often been blamed for lack of a consequent philosophic outlook, because he wavered between metaphysics, pantheism, and materialism. Even the greatest opponents of Zeyer must admit, however, that he was consequent in his ideas. His whole outlook differed profoundly from Vrchlický's: Zeyer was a Gothic, romantic symbolist, his ideals lay in the past, in mediæval mysticism. Hence his æsthetic inclination towards Catholicism. On the other hand, Vrchlický is a thoroughly modern spirit, fascinated by

Roman, but also by modern, civilization, with a joyous outlook into the future.

That Zeyer should have been a cosmopolitan is not surprising: his father was a merchant of French aristocratic origin, his mother was Jewish. Although at home only German was spoken, the historic atmosphere of Prague and Czech surroundings soon awoke in young Zeyer a keen interest in Czech literature. His father's wealth enabled him to complete his education by frequent travels in Scandinavia, Italy, Germany, Russia, and the Near East, and by an assiduous study of Oriental theosophy and Catholic mysticism. His works comprise thirty-four large volumes of epic poetry, poetic novels, and dramas. Despite his love of foreign literatures, especially of Gautier, and of exotic surroundings, Zeyer often chooses native Bohemian mythology for the subject of his poems. His poetry includes: two cycles of heroic songs, *Vyšehrad* and *The Caroline Epopee*, composed on the lines of old French chivalrous poetry about Charlemagne; four volumes called *Love Chronicles*, reflecting various epic stories of Latin and Eastern origin and characteristic of Zeyer's erotically mystic philosophy of love; *The Advent of Forefather Čech*, describing the conflict between Celt and Slav in ancient Bohemia; *The Chronicle of St. Brandan*, a monastic Irish legend, and *Ossian's Return*, another old Gaelic legend. His dramas either take place in exotic surroundings or else deal with the distant past, and suffer from a too pronounced lyric and pathetic element. Their chief effects lie in contrast of characters and conflicts of passions. His dramas include a Chinese comedy, *The Brothers*; an Italian *comedia dell' arte*, *The Old Story*; a Biblical legend, *Sulamit*; an Irish tragedy, *The Legend of Erin*, which served as a libretto to one of Ostrčil's operas; a Japanese play, *Love's Wonder*; and a Spanish tragedy of sinful passion, *Dona Sancha*. Of the same character as his poems and dramas are also his novels and short stories: *Andrea Černyšev*, a Russian story from the reign of Catherine the Great; a chivalrous story, *Amis and Amil*; a Japanese love story, *Gompachi and Komurasaki*; and a psychological novel, *Jan Maria Plojhar*, perhaps his best work of all, containing a great deal of the

poet's own experience of life. The story deals with Bohemia and Italy, and tries to solve the erotic problem, consisting in the tragic conflict of frustrated love and higher religious ideals.

Zeyer's style is unique and full of rare, even if somewhat phantastic, beauty. The spirit of his works is effeminate and exotic, yet it contains many qualities of true poetry: rich metaphors, picturesque descriptions of landscapes, and a passionate lyric sense, which sometimes leads to exaggerated rhetoric or decorative sentimentality, sometimes to really good dramatic effects. The usual conclusion is the rejection of worldly love for the metaphysical love of God. The souls of his heroes, tired and weary after seeking in vain for happiness in the enjoyment of the senses, turn back to religion in search of the Absolute. Zeyer's later stories especially are unequalled for masterly descriptions of exotic surroundings. The leading epic story is clothed in rich, symbolic language, and deals with erotic and metaphysical problems. Zeyer's works show him to be a great idealist, thinker and poet, and disclose a passionate, yet refined and erudite mind, fond of phantastic, erotic, and mystic reflection. The only objection that could be raised against him from the point of view of art is that he indulged in improvisations on borrowed themes. From the French romantics especially he learnt to use rich and exotic colours, while his love of legendary and chivalrous poetry is explained by his admiration for the English pre-Raphaelite poets, who too were pious Gothic Catholics. Zeyer's chief talent lay in his vivid imagination and in his knowledge of old mythology, mediæval legends, and Eastern traditions. The æsthetic objection to his work may be that his style is too rich and that his stories seem unreal and therefore become monotonous.

One of Bohemia's greatest poets was undoubtedly Jaroslav **Vrchlický** (1853-1912), whose real name was Frída. Had he not written in Czech, but in some more universally known language, his name would certainly be pronounced among the names of the world's greatest poets. The very amount of his work is imposing, and earns him the fame of one of the most prolific poets that ever lived.

His original work fills one hundred and fifty large volumes, including thirty-two dramas and several books of prose and of critical studies. Even greater in volume are his translations, comprising an anthology of French and Italian modern poetry, translations of Victor Hugo, Leconte de Lisle, Baudelaire, Corneille, Molière, Rostand (*Cyrano de Bergerac*), Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Petrarca, Tasso, Ariosto, Michel Angelo, Leopardi, Carducci, Canizzaro, Vivanti, Giacosa, the dramas of Calderon, Camoens, Verdagnero's *Atlantis*, Goethe's *Faust*, Schiller's *William Tell*, Hamerling's *Ahasver in Rome*, Ibsen's dramas, Anderson's *Fairy Tales*, Mickiewicz, Aranyi, and Petöfi, as well as translations from Chinese. Prose translations include novels by Dumas, Balzac, France, and Maupassant. In his youth Vrchlický was fascinated also by Shelley, but it was only in his later years that he took a deeper interest in English poetry, from which he translated Browning, Shelley, Rossetti, Swinburne, Byron, Tennyson, Edgar Allan Poe, and Walt Whitman. What is most surprising, however, is not his knowledge of languages and the quantity of his work, but its quality. He had an absolute command of the Czech language in all its subtleties, which enabled him to write with perfect ease the most difficult forms of poetry, in which respect he may be compared only with Tennyson. His marvellous technique produced with equal ease sonnets, Barnville ballads, rondels, odelettes, ghazels, triolettes, and rispets. His translations not only reproduce the originals almost verbally, but they conserve their spirit, form, rhythm, and rhyme, and are, indeed, examples of how a good translation from one language into another ought to be made. How intensely must have burnt the flame of his genius, how keen must have been his sense of perception, when his soul was ever ready for fresh impressions and ceaseless work. His poetic imagination was constantly spurred on to conjure up fresh pictures and to go through ecstasies or depressions, while the poet was in his library on the embankment of the River Vltava, overlooking the beautiful Castle of Prague. What energy, erudition, and brain-power must have been hidden in this genius, if he not only found time to read and learn practically the whole poetry of the world from Homer

to the modern Parnassists, but if he could also lecture as Professor of Comparative History of Literature at the Prague University, translate and compose original poetry!

After so many poets who failed, who lived or died prematurely, Bohemia had at last given birth to a truly great poet—a poet of great talent, outlook, and opportunity. Vrchlický and his friends mark not only a new era in Czech literature, but a new period in the development of Czech civilization, for their advent coincided with the birth of the two great Czech musical composers, Smetana and Dvořák.

It is not surprising that for a genius of such talent and outlook as possessed Vrchlický the Czech horizon and past literary tradition were too limited, and that he therefore turned to the great Renaissance poets and to modern France for inspiration. Among the foreign poets which were nearest to his heart, and which influenced him most of all, were Dante, Victor Hugo, and Leconte de Lisle. Nearest to his temperament were those poets who, like himself, possessed a passionate erotic and lyric spirit with an inclination to reflective philosophy. Dante and Leopardi were the favourites of his youth, although he found the former not modern enough and the latter too pessimistic. Victor Hugo he loved for his prolific pen and his outer splendour, and for his rhetoric and rhythmic power. Vrchlický himself was superior to Victor Hugo in many respects, for his poetry was deeper and more sincere. In his best works Vrchlický indeed completely emancipated himself from the influence of Victor Hugo, and gave up the rhetoric pose for a frank exposition of his own views on history and eternity in the spirit of Dante and Goethe. Leconte de Lisle influenced him only outwardly as regards form and colour effect and general outlook on classic culture, but even this poet cannot be equalled with the wealth of ideas and joyous spirit of Vrchlický. Leconte de Lisle was a positivist, a nihilist, while Vrchlický wisely avoids the dangers of agnosticism. He believes in evolution and as a pantheist adores God in Nature, whose beauty he felt as a living force. Besides Victor Hugo and Gautier, Vrchlický was also fond of their pupils, the Parnassists (Sully-Prudhomme, Vigny, de Banville), and of modern Italian poets. The only Slavs

that interested him were the Poles, with whom he sympathized also politically. No doubt the spirit of the Polish poets, who were also under French influence, was nearest to his heart.

To give an adequate picture of Vrchlický's vast work is an obvious impossibility, and we shall therefore content ourselves with mentioning only his most important works. At the same time, when Neruda published his *Cosmic Songs* at the age of forty-four, Vrchlický, then only twenty-five years old, published already his fifth book, *The Spirit and the World*, which definitely established his claim as a great poet. Both Neruda and Vrchlický had the same ambition: to penetrate the mystery of the Universe. If Neruda says: "We shall bow before no mysteries, our spirit the dome of heavens shall reach," Vrchlický proclaims:—

We'll tear ev'ry cloak,
We'll break ev'ry ire:
Between Hesperus and Orion,
In a sea of Light and Tone,
Shall ring the song of our choir.

But Neruda's songs, though great in their sincerity, appear very simple beside the grand style of Vrchlický. Never before has a Czech poet shown such a wide outlook, such a great conception of the world and its history. Beginning with Biblical pictures, the poet dreams of the beauty of Greek culture, tells us eight mediæval legends, and after reflecting on some modern problems ends with a grand hymn to the Unknown, full of a joyous faith in the victory of human civilization. In this faith Vrchlický was no doubt stimulated by the great progress of science, by Darwin, Haeckel, and Spencer.

Also in his subsequent books of poems Vrchlický is fascinated by the history of humanity. Inspired by Victor Hugo's *Legend of the Ages*, Vrchlický attempts to write in verse the history of the world, and thus originate numerous ballads, romances, legends, and mythological stories, each one expressed in a different form suitable to the spirit of the times, whether prehistoric, mediæval, Renaissance, or modern. The leading idea of his philosophy is the final triumph of civilization over barbarism, of spirit over matter.

Like Faust, Vrchlický wishes to penetrate everywhere, and to acquire all the knowledge of this and the supernatural world. Among all these books we may mention at least two for their great artistic value. *Hilarion* (1882) for the first time in Czech poetry contrasts the ideas of Christianity with classic culture. The poem, which consists of more than 3,500 verses, ends in an apotheosis of life as the incorporation of classic beauty. *Twardowski* (1885) was inspired by the Polish poet Krasiński, and deals with a legend of an unhappy sinful human being struggling in vain with sensual passions. In both these poems Vrchlický solves the problem of a moral struggle by the triumph of the good through the optimistic philosophy of pantheism and humanism.

In his historical philosophy Vrchlický did not depend on the Catholic Dante, but rather on Victor Hugo, who saw in progress the leading idea of history, "*le grand fil mystérieux du labyrinthe humain*," and to whom history was "*un seul et immense mouvement d'ascension vers la lumière*." Nevertheless, Vrchlický's work is far from being a mere imitation of Hugo's. It is more realistic and quite original in conception, actuated by no mere narrow-minded fixed rules and dogmas, as may be found in a similar attempt of Machar. Vrchlický is guided by purely æsthetic considerations in wishing to revive dead beauty and poetry. Like Zeyer, Vrchlický shows a great knowledge of the history of human civilization. In erudition Vrchlický surpassed perhaps even such great poets as Browning, Leconte de Lisle, and Carducci.

In order to understand fully Vrchlický's mentality, and especially his lyric poetry, we must remember that fate was always favourable to him and that he suffered few disappointments in his life. He rose quickly to fame and never suffered from poverty. As a poet he is a mere observer of life, not its conqueror. One book of his poems is characteristically called *What Life Gave Unto Me*. In comparison with Zeyer, he travelled little: he knew Northern Italy and Germany, and visited Paris and Poland. Otherwise his whole spiritual world was centred in his library, from which he looked at life. His first and last

love ended in a happy marriage, and his erotic poetry, therefore, is also free from any discordant, pessimistic strain. It is the poetry of a happy lover and husband whose love-songs are joyous songs of life of a sensuality which never loses the charm of modesty.

His lyric poetry is either sensuous, expressing his erotic temperament or his love of nature, or reflective, expressing his human sympathies for all oppressed. Sometimes his poems are also discreetly patriotic, as the one in which he sings his hymn to Prague, or others about the great past and future of his country. To quote from a translation by Mrs. Rosa Newmarch on the Hradčany Castle at sundown :

The City's old green crest in golden sheaves,
Like fulgent arrows from a quiver bright,
Breaks forth, till tow'rs and gables, roofs and eaves,
And rows of windows bear clear scars of light.
A Bacchic train of clamant, reeling hues
Burns round the keep-sad, silent reveller.
The sapphire bowl of heav'n its red flame spues.
Below spreads night, the dusky leveller.
How glows the castle in this final blaze !
How from the gloom emerge its lofty walls,
Lit up as for the reflex of glad days !
O pilgrim, stay awhile thy soft footfalls
And, dreaming that day's death is the new morrow,
Forget for one brief moment thy wild sorrow.

Vrchlický's reflective poetry shows the drawback of his dependence on others : philosophic problems are often solved merely rhetorically. In his early works there are signs of pessimism under the influence of Dante and Leopardi, from which he later emancipates himself in favour of evolutionism. When deserted by his friends in the nineties he suffers from a new attack of scepticism, but even this crisis he conquers through a stoic quietism under the influence of de Vigny. His reflections about the meaning of life and death become then more profound.

In 1883 Vrchlický began to write dramas, but these suffer from many defects. Vrchlický was in the first place handicapped by an almost complete lack of Czech dramatic tradition, and had to rely on foreign examples. Shakespeare, the romantics, and Sardou left traces on his style

and composition. Like Shelley, Vrchlický suffers from a too pronounced lyrical element and lack of dramatic line and detail. On the other hand, dialogues are full of charm and manly energy. The local atmosphere gives a fitting impression of the place and times, and the æsthetic standard is high. But his best dramas are only the first, while his later works are too pathetic and tedious. His first dramas comprise the classic trilogy *Hippodamia*, to which Fibich composed melodramatic music, *The Death of Odysseus*, and *Julian the Apostate*. Later followed *Love and Death*, *Mary Calderon*, *The Samson Trilogy*, *Lady Godiva*, *Catulla's Revenge*, and others. Of all these *Hippodamia* is considered the best, and shows the poet's great sense of classic fatality. Its philosophy is that life is sweet, but blossoms over precipices of evil and perdition, and has to be protected from falling into them. It is a widely built work with good dramatic effects.

Vrchlický rose quickly to fame and popularity. The only opposition which he met at first came from bigot moralists and short-sighted patriots, who deplored in him a lack of Czech spirit in the choice of his subjects in the spirit of Turgenëv's words that "outside of nationalism there is no art and no truth." At the end of the eighties Vrchlický was, nevertheless, the object of universal and uncritical praise, which unfortunately only strengthened Vrchlický's own lack of self-criticism, obvious in many of his hasty improvisations. Only later criticism (Masaryk, Šalda, Karásek) estimated rightly the poet's true value and importance.

But the campaign which the so-called "young generation" raised somewhat unscrupulously against the forty-year-old poet sorely touched his sensitive soul and affected severely his nervous system. What touched him most was not so much the injustice of many of the objections raised against him as the fact that most of his critics were his own pupils. Among the most unjust objections was, of course, the statement that Vrchlický, the translator of Baudelaire, Maeterlinck, and Walt Whitman, was not modern enough. The young generation understood modernity differently. The influence of Zola and of Russian realism produced a realistic

movement among novelists (Hermann, Šimáček, Mrštík, Herben, Šlejhar, Čapek-Chod) and poets (Svoboda, Machar, Bezruč) who opposed Vrchlický's culture of form, his verbalism, conventionalism, and eclecticism, with a demand for free verse, for realistic, natural expression, and deeper foundation in sentiment (psychic naturalism). French influence was to be paralysed by English and Russian influence. Vrchlický himself was not against modernity, but unfortunately he aggravated his own position by a misplaced defence of Hálek and by a prejudice against realism, naturalism, and decadentism. It is well known that he disliked Ibsen and Nietzsche intensely. Of Nietzsche he said that "he had always a confused, aphoristic, fragmentary mind which could achieve fame only through an exaggerated cult of a few adepts." Another reason why Vrchlický compromised his own position was his disinclination to fight for his own cause. Betrayed by his friends, Vrchlický—at any rate for a time—lost confidence in his success and courage to seek for new ideals.

In one respect his critics were right. They reproached him, as well as Zeyer and Sládek, with eclecticism and conventionalism. It is only natural with a poet whose work was so prolific that a great deal of his poetry should give the impression of mere improvisation, that he should not always be able to rely on his own inspiration, but had to look for ideas and forms to others. Through a regular practice of the culture of form he naturally succumbed to a certain conventionalism. What is surprising is not that he suffered from conventionalism and eclecticism, but that he suffered from them so little. In almost all his works the high artistic standard and the underlying originality of his genius are sufficiently strong to ensure him immortality.

Vrchlický was a protagonist of the culture of form, which is one of the essential attributes of true art. Form gives art life, because through artistic form the poet amplifies life and nature, and transforms them into art. The danger of epigonism lies in its inability to find original form for artistic expression. Epigons try to imitate great masters by borrowing their forms without putting new life into

them. Intuition thus gives way to formalism. Vrchlický cannot, however, with justice be called an epigon. It has been rather paradoxically, yet truly, said of him that, owing to his great technical skill and absolute mastership of form, he failed to create a form of his own, yet his work has always those rare qualities of a noble, artistic spirit which are a guarantee of its artistic value. It is not given to every poet to find an absolutely original way of expression, construction, and contents, without regard to past traditions, just as it is almost impossible for a musical composer to be quite original in every respect, and free from all influence of his predecessors. A typical example of a composer who did not, except in instrumentation, contribute to the progress of music, and nevertheless was a great genius by virtue of his strong artistic personality, was Dvořák. As in the case of Dvořák, the greatest difficulty for Vrchlický was an almost complete lack of native tradition. None the less he rendered Czech literature signal service by widening its outlook beyond the narrow limits of local patriotism and local history. Vrchlický was an idealist, in so far as his works did not express his personal feelings, but served the high ideals of art, beauty, and humanity. In this respect he resembles B. Smetana, who also placed the ideals of art above his personal feelings. For this reason both Vrchlický and Smetana laid so much stress on the perfection of their works. There is no doubt that Vrchlický, though a cosmopolitan, was also prompted by patriotic motives in his desire to enrich the Czech language with fresh possibilities and Czech literature with a new spirit. His effort was, of course, beyond the scope of understanding of narrow-minded patriots just as in the case of Smetana. The fact remains that Vrchlický's poetic language still remains exemplary. Throughout his verses runs joyous melody and a light spirit, and even where he uses old forms or ideas they bear the imprint of his own inspiration. The very existence of other poets inspired him equally as the realities of life and nature. He possessed an unlimited resource of poetic expression for every kind of feeling or idea. His verse is seldom false or pathetic, but often full of vigour, wisdom, and joy of life.

A special category in his production is occupied by books

of poems on other poets. *Masks and Profiles*, which includes portraits of Homer, Goethe, and Shakespeare, is a volume of brilliant essays which have no equal in literature for understanding and intuition. Equally witty and eloquent are *The Sonnets of a Recluse*, and *A Breviary of a Modern Man*, containing pictures of all great men of the nineteenth century, including Renan, Ibsen, Tolstoy, Edison, and Pasteur. In all these works Vrchlický is an interpreter, not a critic, because he appreciates art equally in every form without fixed principles of philosophy, except the general principles of art. He is, in fact, a perfect literary cosmopolitan for whom the power of understanding others becomes an active force of art and life. He formulates his ideal himself as follows :—

All to encompass, all to know, all to intoxicate the soul with
 All that blossoms, shines, and dazzles in statue, picture and song,
 Ev'ry mine to exploit and to drink from ev'ry source,
 To admire the old Greek torso that lies decayed through ages,
 Just as the trembling of the present-day yearning soul,
 That lost the leaflets of its flower of bliss and happiness,
 To live through exaltation of mediæval saints of titanic strength
 And through the caprice of maiden lips, thirsting for love,
 We will live, feel, and understand it all, for
 The springs of all pleasures shall freely flow for us.

The translation of *Faust*, which Vrchlický accomplished in 1890, influenced his later works considerably. Only then did he fully grasp the true greatness of Goethe, his sincerity and directness of expression. Vrchlický's own poetry becomes deeper and less rhetorical, to which contributed greatly also the crisis he had gone through at that time as a result of the campaign raised against him by the "new generation." His bitter feelings of this period are embodied in several volumes, of which *The Windows in Storm* is the most poignant. He inclines to the view that loneliness is his true fate from birth to death, because he discovered that his friends were but shadows. And yet "a faint perfume of past happy days" remained in his heart, helping his soul to come out of the storm strengthened and purified. Abandoned quietism remains, however, at the background of all his later works (*Books of Fairy God-*

mothers, Songs of a Wanderer), full of new wisdom and promise. "A new peace reigns now in my soul, though I be worn and quite alone. To future days' darkness I look in silent resignation. So will I go, not knowing where."

The influence of English poetry, which now also occupies Vrchlický, is most pronounced in the collection *E Morta*. It contains souvenirs of a Czech lady singer who had gone to Brazil and died there. He dreams of her as of an ideal noble woman, converses with her spirit in terms of gentle affection, and reflects on the meaning of life. He concludes that to live in pleasure and glory is all nought, and that to be true to oneself is all. Also in other works his optimistic pantheism now gives way to deeper philosophy. Vrchlický becomes the champion of human brotherhood. He denounces slavery at all epochs of history, and sees in the Christian ideal of love and brotherhood, though never realized, the one ray of sunshine and hope in the dark history of mankind. This Christian ideal he wishes to reconcile with Greek and Roman ideals, striving for equal culture of body and mind. In *Lazar's Hymn*, Lazar's soul rises with the strength of a Hercules and the love of Christ. Yet pantheism remains his ultimate faith :—

My chamber is vaulted :
Unto the free dome of heaven
I feel to be carried away.
I feel death to be a mere window
To the true life, the everlasting day.

An exceptional work among his later books is *Bar Kochba*, dealing with the tragedy of the fall of Israel. This "great dream of my youth," as he called it, is indeed, besides Hilarion and Julian the Apostate, the most powerful of his historic visions. It is rather paradoxical that the greatest work of this lover of the Renaissance should have been a story on the tragic fate of the Jewish race, but the explanation lies in his love of all that was great and tragic in history as well as in his contempt of popular prejudice. The Jewish tragedy is conceived in a purely racial aspect, and no attempt is made at a contrast between the ideals of Jewry and those of Christianity and the classic world.

The concluding prayer of Akiba is a desperate outcry of a dying nation for whom the future has only sufferings in store.

After the year 1900 Vrchlický still produced a number of works, but none of them had the former *élan* of his spirit. The best of them are *Omar's Wisdom* and *Episodes*. Unlike Goethe, Hugo, and Ibsen, Vrchlický in his old age becomes more and more lyrical, simple and natural, and less schematic. In 1908 a nervous shock began to paralyse his physical powers, but not his spirit, which remained active almost to the very end of his life. Though lying in a sanatorium, he wrote in 1909 his *Tree of Life*, which still shows the marvellous power of his mind. The poems show a surprising spirit of energy, sunshine, and harmony. His inspiration is free from any scepticism or fear of the approaching catastrophe. The tree is to him a symbol of the life of nature. It is the same tree of life which "Walt Whitman saw blossom in Louisiana," and which year after year gives birth to youth which turns into old age, to life that ends with death. Soon after Vrchlický died with this mighty pantheistic hymn to Nature and Life on his lips.

Czech Historical Novel.

The general progress of Czech literature is marked not only in poetry, but also in prose. Besides the historical novel, which the second half of the nineteenth century brought to excellence, Czech literature produced numerous realistic novels from the life of the peasant, social stories, psychological novels, and various conventional fiction.

The first historical novelist was a Catholic priest, Václav **Beneš Třebízský** (1849-1884), who wrote over ninety historical stories, the best of them being from the times of the Hussite Wars and of the reign of Rudolf II. From the artistic point of view his stories suffer from a too pronounced patriotic sentimentality, as well as from historical inaccuracy. They do not always reflect correctly the spirit of the period described, and their construction is too romantic, schematic, and unimaginative. Compared with Třebízský both Winter and Jirásek are complete historical

realists. This is not surprising, for they both were learned historians who mastered thoroughly every detail of the history they wrote about.

The works of Zikmund **Winter** (1846-1912) especially reflect faithfully, not only the details and the spirit of the times, but even the language of the period. His favourite period was the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and his best work, *Master Campanus*, describes the story of the White Mountain tragedy in a way which is unique in literature. The events of those fateful days are related with an unbiased mind, and with such an accuracy of detail as if the writer had himself seen them. Jirásek's work, on the other hand, is more voluminous, and is not free from a certain patriotic tendency, though emanating from pure idealism. Both Winter and Jirásek are, like Sir Walter Scott, foremost historians, and cannot therefore be compared with Flaubert, Dumas, Thackeray, Jacobsen, or Tolstoy, to whom historical background was secondary in their effort at a solution of psychological problems or simply at a presentation of a thrilling story of human interest. In his patriotism Jirásek resembles the Polish writer Sienkiewicz, but in his idealism, free from any aristocratic leanings, and striving for the promotion of morality and democracy, Jirásek is even superior to him.

Alois **Jirásek** (born 1851) is undoubtedly still the most popular novelist in Bohemia, and it behoves us, therefore, to take more than a passing notice of him. The literary value of some of his works may be questionable, but nobody can deny the great popularity enjoyed and the political influence exercised by his novels in Bohemia. Jirásek is, in fact, as dear to the Czechs as B. Smetana and Mikuláš Aleš, for through his novels he fanned the flame of Czech patriotism, and kept it burning throughout the years of national anxiety. The Czechs may, therefore, with justice be excused if they are apt to exaggerate the real value of his work, which has its distinct literary merits. A work which would not have these merits, could indeed hardly acquire this popularity and beneficial influence, for only true literature can uplift the human spirit in the way which Jirásek's novels did. La Bruyère rightly observed :

"If a work uplifts our mind, if it foment noble and brave thoughts, do not search for any rules by which to judge its value: it is a good work and the deed of a master." While a work need not be nationalist to be art, the fact that it incidentally serves the cause of patriotism does not necessarily disqualify it from being true art, on the contrary: if nobly presented, the patriotic purpose is well worthy of a true artist's efforts.

Jirásek wrote a great number of historical novels which for the most part are detailed chronicles of clans and families who took part in a popular movement. His early works suffered from some of the drawbacks of Beneš-Třebízský: romantic sentimentality, banal and naïve plots, schematic psychology. Later his works improved considerably, becoming more realistic and more true to life. Jirásek's style is simple, hearty, and sincere. His heroes are seldom individuals, but mostly collective bodies. His best works are: *U Nás* (*Our People*), a chronicle of his own native district in North-Eastern Bohemia, where the tradition of the Reformation and anti-Reformation is still alive; *Temno* (*The Darkness*), devoted to the period of anti-Reformation; *Psohlavci* (*The Dog-headed Folk*), describing the story of a peasant revolt in South-Western Bohemia, where the peasants for a long time preserved special privileges and liberties as guardians of the frontier; *Bratrstvo* (*Brotherhood*), and *Proti Všem* (*Against All*), dealing with the story of the Hussite Wars. The literary value of Jirásek's novels lies in his capacity to describe historical events realistically, as well as in the high morality, idealism, and educational value of his work. He taught the Czechs more about their own history than all the great historians (Palacký, Tomek, Šusta, and Pekař) in their scientific works. He taught them also the *moral* to be drawn from this history by pointing to the high ideals of the Czech Reformation, and to the curses of anti-Reformation which forced the Protestants to hide their creed and had a detrimental effect on their character by teaching them deceit and duplicity. Jirásek thus taught the Czechs to look in history for a better knowledge of themselves and their servitude to Austria. A nation is a community of people bound

together by ties of a common race, language, and ideas, and this community exists also between a nation's past, present, and future. It follows that to know itself well a nation must know its own past, for history is like a mirror reflecting a nation's soul. It is the great didactic and literary merit of Jirásek to have revealed this community of tradition and character of all Czechoslovaks, and to have pointed out those great qualities of moral courage and patriotism which the Hussites possessed, and which were also the driving force of the Czech regeneration.

In 1890 Jirásek began also to write dramas. His historical dramas (*John Hus*, *John Žižka*) are grand historical pictures, while his other dramas (*Otec* and *Vojnarka*) are realistic tragedies from peasant life. A naïve charm characterizes his two plays (*Lucerna* and *Pan Johanes*), purporting to be symbolic fairy-tales and taking place during the period of serfdom in the eighteenth century. All these dramatic works are written conscientiously, reflect well the spirit of their times, and contain a charming local atmosphere, but they lack in dramatic line and in psychological effect.

Other Fiction.

Besides the historical novel attempts were made, under the influence of Russian, French, and Scandinavian literatures, at more advanced forms of novels under the auspices of realism and naturalism. Mere ethnographic interest gives way to a deeper psychological and moral study of peasantry, and the influence of Zola and of the Russian school produces attempts at naturalistic novels, which inaugurates a new era in Czech literature, distinctly opposed to the "Lumír" school. A significant contribution to Czech literature is brought by women writers who raise the standard of feminism and seek for a solution of problems arising from mutual relationship of man and woman.

The traditions of Němcová and Světlá found a follower in K. V. **Rais** (born 1859), who wrote mostly realistic pictures from the life of the peasant. None of these village chronicles show deeper psychology with the exception of two: *Kaliba's Crime* and *A Change for the Better* (Na

Lepším). The style is simple, the descriptions of nature somewhat dry, but the character of the peasant is well outlined.

Better than Rais are Josef **Holeček** (born 1853) and Teresa **Nováková** (1853-1912), who both studied the character of the peasant from the religious, social, and ethical standpoint. Josef Holeček is, like Svatopluk Čech, a great pan-Slavist. With a deep psychological insight he describes the character of the Czechs as compared with other Slavs, of whom he knows best the Southern Slavs. Against Western and German influence Holeček tries to assert Slav influence, and looks to the positive qualities of the Slav character, to sincerity, kind-heartedness, love of truth, and moral courage, for their salvation in the future. His novels include many studies in Yugoslav epics, as well as pictures of his own native Bohemia (*Naši*). They are not novels in the strict sense of the word, for their story is not consequent, but they reveal a poetic mind and a psychological insight into the philosophy and religious outlook of the peasant, of his relation to land and work, and of his democratic spirit. A similar tendency inspired also T. Nováková, who liked to dwell on the influence of Hussitism on the peasant, and who also pleaded the cause of the emancipation of women.

A realistic writer was Karel **Klostermann** (born 1848), a German by birth, who wrote first in German and then also in Czech. His novels are pictures from the life of the inhabitants of the Šumava mountains in South-Western Bohemia. His stories are realistic without any nationalistic bias. Similar in scope are also the works of Czech authors from Moravia: G. Preissová, Herben, the brothers Mrštík, and J. Sumín.

Gabriela **Preissová** (born 1862) chose the subjects of her novels from the country life of Moravian Slovakia. Her novels suffer from a certain sentimentality, but her dramas (*Gazdina Roba*, *Její Pastorkyňa*) are full of a vivid local colour. Their stories are simple, yet realistically dramatic, and served as excellent librettos to modern Czech opera writers (Foerster and Janáček).

Jan **Herben** (born 1857), a historian, a journalist, and

then a senator of the National Democratic Party, wrote books which bear the imprint of his historical studies and his political views, although his apparent chief literary interest centres in the life of Slovak and Czech peasantry. Up to the outbreak of the war Herben was chief editor of Masaryk's organ, *Čas* (*The Times*), and has always been a staunch democrat and a bitter opponent of clericalism, which he criticized both in the light of his historical studies and of his present-day political and religious views. His *Hostišov* is a clever sketch of the Tábor district which used to be the home of the Hussites. Herben analyses carefully the traces which the Czech Reformation has left on that part of Bohemia, and describes the country with an able pen worthy of a Turgeněv. His greatest work, called *Unto the Third and Fourth Generation*, is an interesting chronicle of his own native district in South-Eastern Moravia, containing many clever historical reflections and descriptions. The story itself is somewhat tedious, and is an actual story of Herben's own family, but the style is excellent, and many pages are written in a highly poetic manner.

Jiří **Sumin** (born 1864) is a woman whose real name is Vrbová. Like Preissová, Svobodová, and Viková-Kunětická she sought to analyse the intuitive power and fatalism of women. Influenced by Zola, she studied the life in a Moravian village and small town with more than a mere ethnographic interest. Her outlook is somewhat pessimistic, her pictures of women are a scathing criticism of the egoism of men, her analysis of human passions is merciless in its realism. Sumin's best novel, *Spása* (*Salvation*), may in many respects be compared with Zola's *Lourdes*.

The influence of naturalism in Bohemia was not always a happy one. Those authors who succumbed to it seem to have suffered from materialism, and man in their novels is a mere product of his environment. Psychological conflicts, so far as there are any, are unnatural, and constructed only to suit the outer physical world. The style often becomes shallow. It aims at bombastic effect through meaningless symbolism. Altogether these writers do not attain the level of those realistic writers whose names

we have just mentioned. The typical and most popular of this class of naturalistic writers, V. Mrštík, uses often spectacular terms to express his emotions, but his persons are mere shadows, lacking in moral backbone. Similar defects discount also the value of the other writers of this school.

The best story that Vilém **Mrštík** (1863-1912) wrote is a love-story called *Pohádka Máje* (*A May Fairy Tale*), It contains many good romantic descriptions of nature, but it does not seriously attempt to solve the love problem, and its psychology and ethics are poor. The hero is a lazy, good-for-nothing Oblomov, without brains and without heart. In some places we are reminded of the mental struggles of Mitia from the *Brothers Karamazov*, but Mrštík's version is but a caricature of Dostoevsky's great work. His Ríša is cynical, base, inconsequent, and unreal. Another of Mrštík's heroes, Jordán, in the novel *Santa Lucia*, is a reserved character, living in illusions, who comes to Prague to study, but unfortunately is lured by the temptations of a great city into dissipation, and finally dies in a hospital. Needless to say that none of these weak-willed "heroes" are typical of the Czech student. Mrštík had obviously in mind the great examples of Russian and Scandinavian literatures which deal with similar sordid pathological problems, but unfortunately Mrštík failed to imbue his work with the same deep psychological thought and that moral purpose which constitute the chief value of these works. Moreover, Mrštík's impressionistic pictures often tend to become sentimental and shallow. Thus naturalism, which opposed the "Lumír" school in the name of Russian realism, degenerated into the same verbalism which it sought to combat.

More modest in aspirations and therefore more successful was V. Mrštík's elder brother, Alois. The brothers wrote also some novels together in an attempt at a description of the life of the Moravian Slovaks, and their drama *Maryša*, related to similar peasant-dramas of Jirásek and Preissová, gained considerable success at the National Theatre.

Josef K. **Šlejhar** (born 1864) belongs to the same school as V. Mrštík. He is a mystical pessimist, impressed by

the sufferings of man and beast alike. His limited outlook prevented him, however, from reaching a harmonious conclusion, and his novels attempt in vain in pathetic phrases to evoke the consciousness of the magnetic powers ruling human sufferings. His attempt to caricature shallow moralists, as found in the novels of Strindberg or Tolstoy, also failed for lack of philosophic depth. A similar mystic writer was Merhaut, whose writings have a lofty moral tendency but lack in psychology.

All these writers were under the more or less direct influence of Russian realism, which already earlier (Gogol, Gončarov, Turgeněv) attracted the attention of Czech authors. Russian realism culminated in the novels of Tolstoy and Dostoievsky, and contrasted in many ways with the more rational and materialistic French and English realism. The Russians laid stress on the ethic and religious foundations of human life, and sought relentlessly for truth in religious and moral problems. The theoretical protagonists of modern Russian realism were Masaryk, Durdík, and Mrštík. In literature the most successful attempts at a great novel in the spirit of modern Russian realism were made by Šimáček, Viková-Kunětická, F. X. Svoboda, and K. M. Čapek-Chod.

The works of M. A. **Šimáček** (born 1860), dealing with the life of workmen, artists, and the middle classes, analyse the mental crisis arising from conflicts between prevailing conventions and inherited passions, but they fail to produce a true picture of human sufferings, and are somewhat tedious and sentimental. The activities of F. X. **Svoboda** (born 1860) comprise those of a poet, a novelist, and a dramatist. His style is light, and his object is to find behind everyday incidents deeper psychological motives, which he views from a high standpoint of abstract principles, admitting even a fatalistic explanation of human life.

One of the best modern Czech novelists is undoubtedly K. M. **Čapek-Chod** (born 1860). His earlier novels suffered from the influence of his journalistic career, but his later works placed him in the forefront of Czech literature. His *Caspar Len, the Avenger*, is a scathing study of the forces that drove a bricklayer to crime. The style of this work

is vigorous, and throughout the author shows a deep compassion for the sufferings of the lower classes. Another of his novels, *Anthony Vondřejc*, describes the life of the "Bohemian" artists of Prague in vivid pictures and with a daring psychological insight. One of his latest novels, *Vilém Rozkoč* deals with a similar subject. His novels are not mere monographies of a single person. He paints the spiritual life and anguish of a poet, a pressman, a student, a prostitute, or an artist, and discovers secret ties between them. His novels thus become pictures of social strata, with interesting plots and adventures. His unscrupulous realism, bordering often on the grotesque and bizarre, reminds us of Zola or Dostoievsky. His *Rozkoč* presents certain analogies with Šimáček's *Happiness*, dealing also with the life of a humble artist. But Šimáček's novel is chiefly a story about one person, the hero, and other figures are of secondary importance, and his style and idealistic outlook do not compare favourably with the literary qualities of Čapek-Chod. Čapek describes life with a certain brutality, and with the definite superiority of an accomplished writer who never has recourse to second-rate effects or empty shibboleths. He does not solve any problems or proclaim any lofty ideals, but his novels have, nevertheless, a high artistic and moral value founded on their truthful realism. Their brutality is softened by a mysterious and sometimes even grotesque romanticism. But Čapek never falls, like so many other Czech novelists, into the pit of sentimental lyricism. Every picture is spontaneous and true, every psychological problem is brought to its logical conclusion. The interdependence of the fates of the characters in his novels lends his portraits of human lives that air of apparent bizarrerie which is so typical of this author and which constitutes one of the chief charms of his works.

A separate chapter in the history of Czech literature is occupied by the protagonists of feminism, Růžena Svobodová and Vlková-Kunětická, who as advocates of better education and of rights of women had their precursors in K. Světlá and E. Krásnohorská.

Růžena **Svobodová** (1868-1923), the wife of the poet F. X. Svoboda, limited herself mostly to erotic problems

in the same way as Edgren Leffler in her *Woman and Love*. Her favourite theme is a young woman disillusioned in her dreams about love. Needless to say that few women of to-day live in this unreal world of their own before marriage, and therefore not many awake nowadays to the "brutal" reality afterwards, yet the problem is not devoid of truth or interest. Svobodová's *moral* consists in the sanctity of pure love. Her style is sometimes too flowery, and reveals a tendency for the exotic effects which are so often found in the modern novel. Her favourite characters are barons, counts, and princes, or else people who seem to have nothing better to do than to live in leisure and luxury. Already in her early works she found a positive solution of the sex problem in an ideal marriage union in which the wife is an understanding companion of her husband and a good mother to her children. Svobodová does not hesitate to censure perverted feminism, in which she sees an outlet of eccentric egotism and a senseless imitation of man.

B. **Viková-Kunětická** (1863), on the other hand, developed from a writer of feministic novels with an erotic background to an uncompromising advocate of women's political and moral emancipation. Her feminism, which prompted her also to take an active part in politics, is a revolt against the immorality of men and against the prevailing prejudices of society which allow men complete moral licence while condemning women for the least sin against conventions. In her solution of the love problem and of the relationship between man and woman, and especially in her postulate of the chastity of man before and after marriage, Kunětická is in agreement with Tolstoy and Björnson. Her other advanced views resemble more the views of modern French novelists. Thus, for instance, Kunětická goes to the extreme of advocating woman's right to motherhood, whether in or out of wedlock. She knows of only two types of women: those to whom marriage is a necessity, and those who are independent enough to dispense with a man's support in life, but who none the less do not cease to be women, and have therefore an equal right to all the functions which a woman is destined to fulfil in life. This problem has

become especially acute in modern times, when there are more women than men, and when on account of general social conditions many women are forced to earn their own living. In Czechoslovakia the problem of depopulation is not, however, as great as in France. There are, of course, also obvious objections to these theories on moral grounds, because they might lead to all the vices and promiscuity of free love. Men at least could raise an equally just claim of their right to educate and look after their children. True emancipation must lead to a better companionship between husband and wife, but not to a disruption of family life. The positive value of Kunětická's work, however, remains her well-meant attempt at a breakdown of popular prejudice against illegitimate child-birth and a sound criticism of the present-day immorality of men. Viková-Kunětická was always a staunch upholder of woman suffrage, and was even before the war elected unanimously by all the Czech parties to the Diet of Bohemia, when the Austrian Constitution did not recognize the right of women to vote or to be elected. The rise of the Czechoslovak Republic meant also a complete political emancipation of women.

Contemporary Czech Poetry.

Modern Czech poetry deserves a more universal fame than it has hitherto enjoyed. It compares favourably with modern poetry of any other nation, and the only reason why it is not more widely known outside of Bohemia is the scanty knowledge of Slav languages in the West and the difficulty of translating from Czech into English.

We have already made allusion to the spiritual revolution which the so-called *realistic school* wished to bring about in the nineties. Its critical efforts were directed at a political, moral, and spiritual regeneration in the spirit of modern ideas. Under the growing influence of Socialism on one hand and of Masaryk's realism on the other a healthy reaction set in and mercilessly fought against an exaggerated cult of historical study, against shallow pan-Slavism and Jingoism, against religious indifferentism. It demanded a more just social order and better ethical and political conditions. In many respects this generation more or less

consciously fell back on the traditions of Neruda and Havlíček both in politics and in literature.

In poetry, in particular, the new school opposed Vrchlický, whom they somewhat unjustly accused of eclecticism, formalism, and verbalism. Their aim was to discover new values in art and to enrich poetry with new ideas. More than to the beauty of the word they looked to its meaning, proclaiming ruthless truth, depth, and sincerity of feelings, and wealth of contents for their axioms. The realistic movement laid a special stress on art as medium of expression of great ideas. In the artist they saw a pioneer in social and moral questions who has to identify his human with his artistic personality and not create art for the sake of art only. Against French influence (Victor Hugo, Zola) the new generation promoted the knowledge of English and Russian literatures. All these efforts resulted in an enrichment of poetry, which gained both in form and in contents. The new lyric poetry is a passionately and daringly true confession of the modern generation. Besides a bitter criticism of the existing social and political conditions and conventions the new generation raised the banner of modern ideals. Nevertheless, it has not severed itself as completely from tradition as it had wished, and thus we often find its unconscious dependence on the examples set by Neruda and Vrchlický.

The characteristics of the individual poets of this generation vary a great deal. Some of them, as Machar or Bezruč, aim at ruthless frankness, at brutal truth. In their radical views on religious, social, and national questions they show the predominance of their intellectualism over sentiment. Their verse reminds us of Neruda's through its simplicity, but it is more terse and vigorous. As against the "Lumír" generation, which aimed in the first place at a plastic, melodious verse, the realists abhor all pompous pathos, and suspect in this æsthetic effort insincerity. The words of their poems are chosen with the primary regard to their meaning, not to their beauty, while blank verse is their favourite means of expression. Nevertheless, these poets succeed in preserving the necessary beauty of poetic language, the effect of which they enhance by the wealth of

thought put in it. Their work is a final defeat of romanticism, and their firm conviction is the faith that only such art lives which emanates directly from the passionate chaos of life, and does not stop before any of its dissonances.

Other poets of the contemporary generation, of whom the most prominent are Sova and Březina, comprehend realism less crudely owing to their acute sensibility to outward impressions. They are open to all emotions of the senses and of the intellect alike. This applies especially to the impressionist Sova, while Březina is foremost a symbolist whose wide intellectual outlook draws visionary pictures of rare splendour, which stand for great abstract ideas and are masterly woven into the fabric of his mystic philosophy.

This sensibility and symbolism degenerate in some poets (for instance, Karásek ze Lvovic) into decadent morbidity. By their decorative tendency and cult of the word these poets ostensibly build more on Vrchlický than on Machar, but this resemblance is only of outward character. Their historical monstrosities, their love of everything eccentric and pathological, has nothing in common with the lucid, harmonious outlook of Vrchlický. The one paradoxical merit of these decadent romantics lies in their contribution to the final downfall of romanticism, which they sought to save.

The deviation of some modern poets (Sova, Březina) from the original realistic tendency is probably due to the influence of modern Czech criticism, with F. X. Šalda at the head. Šalda (born 1867), who is also a poet and a writer of dramas, acquired his erudition in France from Hennequin, Guauy and Morice, and partly also from Ruskin, Carlyle, and Emerson. His brilliant analytic essays made him the founder of Czech literary criticism, and contributed greatly to the progress of literature. Šalda believes that art must not only reflect life or promote certain ideas, but that it must enrich life organically by a combination of the reflection of life, of deep ideas, and of sentiment with a technically perfect artistic form, because contents and form are equally important in art.

The modernity of Josef Svatopluk **Machar** (born 1864), the chief pioneer of realism in poetry, lies more in the new ideas with which he seeks to fertilize poetry than in any new forms of artistic expression. The tradition of Neruda and Havlíček had an obvious influence both on his diction and on his world outlook. The dependence on Neruda especially is marked in his earlier works, while later works show a mere simplification of form, and formally at least they are of far less value for the progress of poetry than the works of Sova or Březina. It is true that Machar used to be regarded as a revolutionary poet, but the revolutionary character lay much more in his radical, social, political, and religious views than in the poetry itself. His intrinsic value as poet is considered far less to-day, when violent arguments about his works have abated, than it was proclaimed by his admirers to be some twenty years ago. Of the greatest value are, in fact, his early works, *Confiteor*, *Tristium Vindobona*, and *Golgatha*, while in prose only his *Confessions of an Author* and *Rome* can claim a permanent place in literature. Vrchlický's poetic vision gave way to Machar's moralizings about politics, about the woman question, and about history. Vrchlický's pure rejoicing in classic and Renaissance culture gave way to Machar's rationalistic cult of strength and duty.

In the three volumes of *Confiteor* (1887-1892) we find strong traces of Neruda's and Mácha's youthful pessimism, but the views expressed are those views to which Machar remained true throughout his life, and which show him as a strong independent personality and a dauntless critic of everything that is false and superficial. In the prologue to the first book he calls it "a relentless mirror of the times, of my soul and of humanity." It is a lyric diary of a modern erotic temperament, embittered by spleen, irony, and pessimism, disbelieving in science and progress. Sincerity of sentiment, an opposition to current conventions, a concise, terse, yet pregnant verse, and a vigorous manliness, bordering sometimes on crudeness in its search for truth, such are the chief characteristics of this work. The other two volumes are equally pessimistic and critical, and contain impressions and moods of the moment, projected with

masterly ingenuity and short epigrams, criticizing existing political and social conditions. "The modern sonnet," says Machar, "is like a dagger unsheathed from the scabbard: its shine is beautifully blue, but when it strikes it wounds, for its blows are true."

Machar's criticism of the aimlessness and superficiality of the Czech political parties, and especially his attacks against the Jingoism of the liberal Young Czechs, made him by no means popular at first, and earned him the charge of lack of patriotism. Nevertheless, Machar felt his nationality very deeply, as he proved by his *Tristium Vindobona* (1893), expressing his yearning for his native country, which he left in order to earn his living as a bank clerk in Vienna. Machar's attitude to patriotism was the same as Neruda's and Havlíček's. He hated people who at every opportunity waved the national flag and talked of Hus and Žižka, while in reality they were thinking only of their own selfish interests, and had nothing in common with Hussite ideals. How true, on the other hand, rang his confession of his own love for his country. The Czech lion seemed to him as Samson in the arms of Delila-Vienna—a lion that had lost his proud mane and had been blinded. He had a pity for his nation that

Aimless, of rudder and oars bereft
Is soaring in front of the enemies' shores,
Helplessly catching phrases from right and left,
And wasting in vain attempts its force.

In despair Machar raises his voice and implores his people to wake up from lethargy, to give up petty party struggles and to direct their forces against their chief enemies in Vienna and Rome. Though this volume appeared two years before Svatopluk Čech's *Songs of a Slave*, its success was far overshadowed by the success of the latter in the same way as Neruda was once overshadowed by Hálek.

A similar tendency as in *Tristium Vindobona* may be found also in his following work, *Boží Bojovníci* (*God's Warriors*), which is the greatest political satire since the days of Havlíček's *Baptism of St. Vladimír*. In the next two books Machar appears as a champion of feminism.

Zde by Měly Kvěsti Růže (*Here Roses Ought to Grow*) is a collection of lyric and epic poems describing the sufferings of woman, and appealing for greater sympathy and understanding for her lot. Condemning her dependence on man and deploring her solitude if childless, the poet wants her to be treated more as a human being and man's equal than as a cook, a mistress, or a nurse. The modern woman has a right to independence, as well as a need of kind treatment, faithful love, and human understanding. A similar tendency is hidden in *Magdalen*, which is a story of a fallen woman who tries in vain to reform, and who is forced by the stigma of social conventions to return to her former slave-like ways of living.

An Excursion to the Crimea describes the poet's impressions of a visit to the Crimea. The epic form and the subject of the poems accounts for the broader and more majestic flow of the verse, which, nevertheless, remains concise. This book belongs, together with *Confiteor*, probably to the most inspired of Machar's works.

In *Golgotha* Machar began to expound his philosophy, founded on Nietzsche's *Antichrist*, and proclaiming the cult of force and reason as opposed to the philosophy of pure Christianity. The cycle *Conscience of the Ages*, consisting of five volumes (*In the Splendour of the Hellenic Sun*, *Poison from Judea*, *Barbarians*, *Pagan Flames*, and *Apostles*), to which he added two more volumes after the war, *They* and *He*, on the story of Napoleon, contains a development of the historical and moral rôle played by Christianity, criticized on the grounds of absolute morality, and expounds Machar's views on historical events. Beginning with Chinese, Egyptian, and Jewish mythology, the poet reviews the history of the triumph and decay of Rome, the advent of Christianity and its historical mission. The idea of a poetic review of history was by no means new. It was conceived before by Victor Hugo and Vrchlický, and, artistically at any rate, carried out much better than by Machar. Besides some very good portraits of historical personalities Machar's work contains very little of permanent literary value, and the whole plan seems foreign to his spirit. It is true that throughout the work its philosophy is more

consistent than in Vrchlický's work, but otherwise it is too didactic and rational, lacks in variety and beauty of form, and suffers from a too pronounced and one-sided anti-Catholic tendency. Its verse is often superficial and dry, and becomes monotonous. It is clear that if Machar brought about a healthy reaction after Vrchlický's verbalism by laying stress on the importance of the idea and meaning of every word, he failed artistically when he tried to imitate Vrchlický's attempt at a poetic rendering of history, however great was his knowledge of it and however much philosophic thought he gave to it.

Machar's philosophy rests on the antithesis of Christian asceticism and the classic ideals. Though not in agreement with Christian philosophy, Machar has nevertheless a great admiration for the personality of Jesus Christ as a great dreamer. According to Machar it was St. Paul who made out of His ideals of purity, kindness, and love mere dogmatic theology. This dogmatism and later asceticism became a poison which benumbed old Rome and hastened its downfall. The ascetic madness of the early Christians, yearning for the advent of Christ, hardened their hearts, but it was soon replaced by militant Christianity which no longer hesitated to gain political power, and instead of practising self-repression became addicted to worldly pleasures. Christianity became a world power only by denying its own self. Instead of being a religion of meekness, love, and simplicity, it became an aggressive Church, desirous of worldly power and wealth. Proud, vain, wicked, hard-hearted impostors became the representatives of Christ on this earth, resembling much more than Christ the children of Belial in their rejoicings at vice and murder, perpetrated in Christ's name at their instigation. It is not so much Christianity that Machar hates as its caricature, caused by dogmatism, asceticism, and fanaticism. Through the mouth of Diocletian he expressed the greatest respect for the religion of pure Christianity, but facts and realities forced him to fight against its abuse, above all against the Catholic Church, which, according to him, perverted religion into dogmas which are opposed to reason, and which turned into a political organization. With Julian the Apostate

he asks: "Is it enough to believe? To declare one's faith by mouth and yet have the soul of a brute?" Machar wants deeds, not words. Faith without deeds is dead, proclaimed already John Hus, and Machar draws from it the logical conclusion that every thinking man must be against every dogmatic religion which is opposed to reason and does not rely above all on sound moral principles which it also puts into practice. The question is not what to believe, but how to live in order to be good. It is not the pagan religion of the ancient Greeks and Romans that he admires, but all that was truly great, sound, and good in their lives, in their philosophy, in their relation to Nature, in their culture of the body and the spirit alike, in the joyous harmony between their spiritual and actual life. Machar's rational philosophy is that of the Stoics.

From a fervent Catholic which Machar was in his early life, he became, through a study of Czech history and of philosophic works, a bitter opponent of the Catholic Church, and was therefore denounced as an atheist. But can we consider an atheist and a wicked man one who, like Machar, believes in great ideals, whose only aim in life was to combat hypocrisy, religious indifferentism, moral duplicity, and injustice of every kind, and who himself always led an honest life? Dogma is easier overcome than the false morality which it implants, and Machar, like many other great Czechs, rightly felt the curse which forcible conversion to the Catholic creed meant for his nation. Hence his call "away from Rome," and "no good Czech can be a good Romanist," hence his advocacy of a better religious life, of higher morality. His moral courage and earnestness of purpose, his love of truth and sincerity, at least deserve the recognition even of his adversaries.

Apart from this, the artistic value of Machar's work cannot be said to have gained through his uncompromising and one-sided religious views. In prose especially Machar often borders on the vulgarity of the secular platform propagandists in his bitter anti-clericalism. This violent anti-Catholic attitude is also in his *Confessions* and in *Rome*. The former autobiographical work is, nevertheless, a very

interesting picture of an average intelligent Czech student, while the latter work, containing reflections from his visit to Italy on classic Rome, Catholic Rome, and modern Rome, is full of wit and based on a thorough knowledge of the subject. Machar's prose, which includes also a number of polemical feuilletons written originally for the *Čas*, is written in the same concise language as his poetry. His clarity of style, his wit, and his bitter criticism of everything shallow, false and conventional, often remind us of the sarcasm of G. B. Shaw. Despite his effort at being thoroughly modern, Machar nevertheless has obviously built on past traditions of Neruda and Havlíček.

Another realistic poet is Peter **Bezruč** (born 1867, real name Vladimír Vašek), who devoted all his talent to the exposition of the cause of the suffering miners of Těšín Silesia. The volume of his work, embodied chiefly in a collection called *The Songs of Silesia*, is small, but the masterly way in which he pleads the social and national cause of his miners, despised and oppressed by foreign capitalists, with the object of rousing the conscience of his nation and of the world in general, testifies to the high artistic and human value of his work. Though voicing the revolt of an oppressed class and nationality of a small district, his appeal is so elemental, true, overwhelming, and tragic that it acquires a pan-human interest, for it may in the same way apply to the cause of miners or oppressed nationalities in other parts of the world. Though more modest than Machar, whose *Tristium Vindobona* forms a parallel to the nationalist appeal of the *Silesian Songs*, he has been even more successful in using to full advantage simple, terse, and condensed style to intensify the tragic effect of his hymn-like improvisations. Every word has its crushing and monumental portent. The poems are written in a purposely coarse, yet rhythmic verse. The most trifling incidents of everyday life are raised with a grand religious pathos to a high tragic level. The tragedy of the people of whom he sings with despair, those "last 70,000" Czech miners that are left in Těšín Silesia, consists in the menace which before the war threatened them with extirpation as a separate nationality. The author talks of

himself as of a phantastic person, "the first and the last bard" of his people :—

I Peter Bezruč, Bezruč of Těšín,
Wandering bard and blundering fiddler,
Rebel insane and drunken singer,
Malevolent owl of the Těšín tower,
I play and sing of thundering hammers,
The hammers of Vítkovice. . . .

And Bezruč then proceeds to describe the miners' lot :—

Hundred years did I live in a pit muzzled,
Hundred years did I dig coal.
In that time in my arms bereft of flesh
Muscles have stiffened and are as of iron. . . .
Bread with coal I must take with me to eat,
From morn till night must I toil,
While there on the Danube stand palaces
Built from my blood and my sweat. . . .
Hundred years in a pit I kept still.
Who will repay those hundred years to me ?
But when I threatened them with my own hammer,
They all began to laugh and to sneer.
All ye in Silesia, I call to ye all,
All ye heartless masters of mines :
The day will come when flames and smoke shall rise,
The day will come for us to settle accounts.

A similar poem, presenting a gloomy picture of a miner's life ("I dig, under the earth I dig . . .") will be found in Paul Selver's *Modern Czech Poetry*. The difficulty of translating Bezruč into English and preserving both metre and rhyme is not inconsiderable owing to the compactness and flexibility of the Czech language, in which it is often possible to express in one word what in English requires several words.

The poems of Bezruč have throughout a sinister note, for they are founded on the belief that the Czechs of Těšín Silesia are bound to die out in consequence of foreign oppression :—

So little blood have I left,
And yet it gushes forth from my lips.
When on my grave grass will grow,
When I shall rot in the field,
Who in my place will lift up the shield ?

The same sceptical spirit, bitterly conscious of the shortcomings of the age, its social and political evils, its chaos, nervousness, and decadent tendencies, pervades also the writings of A. Sova (born 1864). But here also ends all analogy between Sova and Machar or Bezruč, for only Sova's early works may be called realistic, while his later poems, though always stamped with the pessimistic imprint of the age, show an intense growth of his genius in the direction of that sensitive reflection which is found also in Vrchlický and Heyduk. If Machar is foremost a man of intellect, Sova is acutely sensitive, and his poems are the work of an exalted, sensuously agitated, tremulous, and apprehensive spirit. They have the charm of intimacy and the sensitiveness of a man who had felt more acutely than others the triviality of his age, who yearned more deeply for a better life, purified by beauty and justice, who "before the dawn sang a painfully exalted song to the sad posterity of a sad century." Realities in Sova's poems are reduced to symbols which serve him as a background for phantastic visions. The reader, nevertheless, always instinctively feels the close relationship between the artist's soul and his work. "Spirited words have proud aspirations, a modest heart is tender, chaste." Sova's whole life, all his spiritual sensations, impressions, and sufferings, are discretely embodied in the musical verses, the writing of which was a vital necessity for him. Vrchlický also felt deeply the drama of human life, but his quiet, harmonious outlook on life was replaced by Sova's turbulent, restless sensitiveness of all the moral and social complexities of modern life, struggling in turmoil for new values and new ideals. All his books, from *Compassion and Revolt* to *Sufferings and Hopes*, are inspired by the same sensitiveness of problems, courageously approached in an attempt to show the ways leading to "the valleys of new kingdoms" where harmony reigns between spirit and body, between goodness and strength.

In order to understand both Sova and Březina we must remember that they both came from South Bohemia, the home of the Hussites and the cradle of Czech philosophic and religious thought. As a poet-philosopher, sensitive

dreamer, and impressionist Sova resembles in many ways Josef Suk, the great modern Czech musical composer. Sova's artistic comprehension and sensitiveness inspires him to write subtle melodious verses in which he draws pictures of simple landscapes and phosphorescent atmospheres of large cities as well as melancholy erotic problems of disrupted and desolate love. Ever discreet, Sova feels discretely also his nationality in dreams which are conjured up by the "solitary strings of his soul," of the mission to which his small nation is destined in the general interests of the salvation of mankind through human love, sacrifice, and solidarity. In prophetic words he appeals to his people :—

Europe doth passionately embrace
 But those who truly live :
 Those the victors of fearful combats,
 Those who love the fruits of ancient culture,
 Those who conquered for themselves a place
 If need be even with sword in hand
 Ere the decisive scenes had begun
 Behind the suddenly lifted curtain.

Among Sova's best works we may mention at least *The Broken Soul*, containing besides some lyric poems, for the first time a psychological study of the sentimental and spiritual crises of man, arising from conflicts between the realities of life and ideals. A passionate outcry of a sorely tried soul is the volume called *Stormy Ordeals* (*Vybournée Smutky*), in which the poet solves the problem of the decay and decline of modern civilization by invoking a better, harmonious future for mankind. The same spirit, expressed in symbolic, visionary pictures of a Messianic, chiliastic dreamer, inspires also *The Valleys of a New Kingdom*. Although a social Utopist in his extreme individualism, Sova proved his national sensibility, combined with a subtle sense of sarcasm, in the *Three Songs of To-day and To-morrow*, while in the *Adventure of Courage* he formulated the moral principles of art, placing above all sincerity to oneself. In *Lyrics of Love and Life* Sova returned to his earlier intimate melancholy melodies, bordering often on cruelty in their outspoken frankness

of the poet's own self. Sova's last works are of the same lyrical character with the exception of *Struggles and Fate*, containing ballads and semi-historical pictures.

Otakar **Březina** (born 1868) has gone through a similar course of development from analytic impressionism and romantic pessimism to positive symbolism and visionary mysticism, through which he conjured up grand pictures of universal co-operation. Apart from the mutual influence which Sova and Březina exercised on each other in certain respects, and apart from a certain superficial outward resemblance to Swinburne, Walt Whitman, Emerson, Maeterlinck, or Emile Verhaeren, we would in vain seek for any analogy between Březina and another Czech or foreign poet. His inspiration springs equally from Indian and Christian mysticism, from racial, ancestral home tradition, and from modern social and moral idealism. The deep philosophy which underlies his works is indeed the chief substance of his originality, and the most striking and fundamental characteristic by which he differs from other poets. In his leanings towards mysticism, platonism, and Christianity he evidently voiced the traditions of his ancestors, of Štítný, Chelčický, and Komenský in their deep piety, speculative philosophy, and ethical idealism. But the altruistic and humanitarian ideals of the Czech Reformation are apparent even in those of his utterances which are based on modern evolutionism and monism, and which call for universal justice, the cult of work, moral evolution of women, and a monistic "image of constant evolution towards a mysterious Will with the co-operation of all atoms of the Universe and with the intrinsic unity of all action and thought" (M. Marten).

Otakar Březina, the solitary dreamer of rare metaphysical vision, embodied his philosophy into five volumes of verse and a book of essays, ceasing at the age of thirty-seven to write any more, that he might live in silent solitude for the rest of his life. Nevertheless, these five volumes were sufficient to enable him to express through them fully his passionate ecstasy of mystic yearning after God, his joyous love of mankind and of the Universe, his hymns of solidarity with all his working, thinking, and suffering fellow-men.

His later silence and seclusion from materialistic life are, indeed, only an outcome of his philosophy of the non-acceptance of current values.

His first book, the *Secret Distances* (1895), is his most personal and lyric work, youthfully pessimistic, yet already typical of his spirit. The following few quotations are taken from Paul Selver's lucid monography on Březina :—

I ciphered life's account in solitary session
And to the flower-bed of my dreamings I retreated,
More in the thought than in the deed was my transgression,
And phantoms I adored and blurred forebodings greeted.

In the "Evening Prayer" his excessive introspection gives way to the first mystic and speculative vision :—

Holy one, descend upon the dim lamp of my gaze,
Pour fresh oil in it and enkindle comprehension,
With the ray of my glances let me behold, a myriad miles removed,
The dusk of ancient ocean-forests and summits of ecstasy.

In the concluding poem on "Art" Březina bids God :
"torture, burn, in sorrow's prison-houses blanch Thou
my face as snow."

In the *Dawning in the West* (1896) Březina still feels intensely his own sufferings, and is still sensitive to suggestive impressions, yet for the first time boldly hoists the flag of his transcendental aims, offering them the earth and all its love and pleasures. His attitude to death, evil, and sufferings gradually changes, and becomes an impetus to philosophic speculation. As Paul Selver says, "Březina introduces his characteristic theory of an inherited and unatoned-for curse by which life is haunted and complete happiness rendered impossible."

The *Polar Winds* (1897) marks a still further progress in his revelation of positive mystic values, and simultaneously also a tendency towards a greater freedom of form, a more majestic flow of verse, and a deeper philosophic penetration, through which the beauty of worldly phenomena is symbolically explained.

Less transcendental than the last volume is the book called *Temple Builders* (1899). From the vast Universe the poet turns his gaze to the uncertainties and tragic

questions of the realities of life on this earth, to the treacherous appearances of matter. Březina dreams of "uncounted multitudes" which "through the overcast majesty of things sadly ranged," and describes the melancholy work and toil of mankind. He differentiates between the "disinherited," who "as ants, swarming from crannies, slaves creeping through life as in forbidden gardens, passed mutely around us," and the "elect," the Temple Builders, who "alone of all knew another world by tokens. Like a promise of another heaven and another earth they saw the horror and splendour of things. In the fullness of unnumbered shapes they felt the first bracing of Thy creative breath, a-sparkle from all the highest tracks of beauty."

The noblest and most impressive translation of the positive values of his mysticism are embodied in *The Hands*. All Březina's humanitarian philosophy, all the brilliant and abundant imagery so typical of his work, is projected in the central motive of evolutionary monism of the Universe : numberless invisible hands rhythmically carry out its laws.

In dazzling whiteness of light lay the earth, like a book of songs
Before our eyes. And thus did we sing :
Lo, in this moment the hands of myriads are locked in magical chain
That begirds all continents, forests, mountain-ranges,
And across silent realms of all oceans is outstretched unto brethren.

Penetrated by a mystical optimism and hope the poet sings :—

Because of the secret of grief, death, and new birth,
Blissful is Life.

Because of the invisible presence of the great and holy among
our kindred

Who wander in our midst, in gardens of light,
And from farness of all ages converse with our souls
Graciously,

Blissful is life.

Through this work Březina proclaimed the gospel of the co-operation of all the millions of people dead, alive, and to be born, solidarity in work and sufferings, and yearning for the laws of a new social order, founded on the absolute justice of God.

The *Music of the Springs* (1903) is a book of essays, explaining Březina's work and ideas, his ethical and altruistic convictions, and his faith in the ultimate triumph of justice.

The translation of Březina's poems into English presents obvious difficulties. His symbolic diction and subtle word associations, added to the syntactical effects, concentration, and verbal economy of the Czech language, make an adequate rendering of his works into another language almost impossible. Březina was a master both of form and of verse, and in this respect his work is a culmination of Vrchlický's formalist tradition. His cult of beauty serves him, however, only as a means towards a better expression of his ideas. As a poet of deep liturgic prayers and collective thanksgiving hymns, as a prophet and visionary who mastered completely the pathos of ideas, and through rich metaphors bridged over the gulf between the world of realities and the supernatural world of transcendental ideas, Březina has no equal in modern poetry. He contributed greatly to the enrichment of poetic language and form, without ever becoming unnecessarily paradoxical, pathetic, or decorative.

The rise of the above-mentioned four great poets and strong personalities (Machar, Bezruč, Sova, and Březina) led naturally to the rise of a number of epigons in whom the tendencies of realism on one hand and of symbolism and mysticism on the other degenerated into less worthy forms of poetry. Symbolism, impressionism, and mysticism in particular produced the so-called illusionist school, more or less aptly described also as the decadent generation, and represented by Jiří **Karásek** ze Lvovic (born 1871). Any resemblance between him and Březina is, of course, only superficial, for Březina has nothing in common with those communings with death, horror, and perversity which the decadents so freely indulged in. Their poems are a mixture of nervous and sensuous impressionism, nihilism, neo-romanticism, and elegiac lyricism, influenced by the French and Russian decadent movement. Karásek's love of aristocratism, Mediæval Catholicism, and paradoxical eroticism, bordering on perversity, is indeed diametrically

opposed to Machar's philosophic and artistic ideals. Another exponent of the same school was Miloš Marten, who stood for the axiom of "*L'art pour l'art*." All that can be said in favour of the decadents is that they had a sense for the beauty of style.

An honourable exception to this rule is another member of the same school, Otakar **Theer** (1880-1916), who, especially in his *Fears and Hopes*, grew from a mere sensualist into an intellectualist, and sought for positive æsthetic and ethical ideals. His work marks the culmination of the free verse.

Of quite a different order is the poet Victor **Dyk** (born 1877), a spokesman of radical nationalism, artistically influenced by Machar and Heine. As a rationalist and abstract dialectic he differs profoundly from Vrchlický, and represents far more the continuation of the tradition of Neruda and Čech. His passionate appeals for bolder nationalism lack, however, in depth and originality. Being too tendentious they are not convincing, and lack in that inner sincerity of artistic expression which made the works of Bezruč immortal.

Opposed to Dyk politically, but related to him artistically, stands S. K. **Neumann** (born 1857), a poet of anarchism and later of Communism, who already in early life suffered from persecutions on account of his convictions. Neumann is at once a romantic epicurean who likes to pose as a sensual antichrist, and a primitivist who in concentrated diction dreams of Utopias, of the victory of liberated proletariat over capitalist bourgeoisie. Sometimes he dreams romantically about the strength of the earth, the beauty of forests, of dances, and of sensuous pleasures, sometimes again he draws brutal pictures of the infernal atmosphere of factories, of streets soaked in the blood of the revolting labour masses. A similar tendency prevails in the poetic, prose, and dramatic works of F. Šrámek, a lyric impressionist, and his friend Ivan Olbracht.

The desire to promote Communism through literature has also infected lesser talents of our contemporary poetry. From the point of view of art and literature these works are seldom of any real value. Strangely enough the works

of the promoters of this "proletcult," gathered round the review *Devětsil*, bear an imprint of the most sophisticated, aristocratic "*L'art pour l'art*," and their poetic language must often be incomprehensible to the masses of the working people. These authors appear as experienced globe-trotters who speak of nothing but foreign towns, transatlantic liners, jazz-bands, electricity, radios, sky-scrapers, and other wonders of this mechanical age, thereby hiding the internal vacuum of their cubistic, futuristic, and dadaistic creations. Strong words without meaning are hurtled together to impress the reader in the same way as a thrilling picture of the woolly West is projected to affect the spectator in a cinema. To these authors belongs especially the most passionate of the contemporary exotics, Ivan Schulz, who tries to appear cosmopolitan by means of futuristic impressionism, and the even more chaotic, though more promising novelist, Vladislav Vančura, who at least does not hide his Czech origin and has many qualities in common with Čapek-Chod.

The only poet who succeeded in delivering himself from the chaotic anarchy of this school and contributed positively to the enrichment of our poetry was George **Wolker** (1901-1924). Both Wolker and his friend, Josef Hora, belonged to the *Devětsil* group, but fortunately both extricated themselves from its senseless sensualism and crude sensationalism. Wolker rightly felt that revolutionary poetry must not dwell on the revolutionary words employed, or on theories and descriptions calculated to serve as political propaganda, but that it must lie deeper in the ideals proclaimed. In this way he ceased, however, to be a mere spokesman of the Communist Party, and became an adherent of high humanitarian and artistic ideals. His poetry is deeply religious, warm, and humanly rhythmical. It had gone through a development from mystic pantheism to anthropocentrism, in which man becomes the centre of the Universe. Everything depends on the relation between man and the Universe. In Wolker's opinion "to overcome grief is greater than to suffer from it." Dreams which weaken the soul in its aggressiveness must be done away with by being realized Wolker's

anthropocentrism and anthropomorphism grow later into the belief that the centre of the world lies in struggling humanity and the human deed. His best work, *The Difficult Hour*, is an eloquent outcry of a man who, thirsting for justice, goes out to fight for the purification of love and for the awakening of righteous indignation. Pathetic is the last poem, which contains forebodings of the approaching death that cut his life short at the age of twenty-four. The poet struggles heroically against the fear of death in thinking of the sufferings of mankind, and proclaims his faith in the eternal life of the soul after death. His work, though of necessity small and bearing traces of his youth, earned him indeed this immortality, for it has its value in its adherence to pure, melodious verse and idealism. Unfortunately his example did not attract any followers, and soon after his death the *Devětsil* group turned to a new personality, Vítězslav Nezval, who, in contrast to Wolker's realism and humanism, returned to the ideals of romanticism, individualism, and symbolism. In his work the primary object of "proletarian" poetry has disappeared almost completely, but whether his talent is great enough to contribute permanently to our poetry remains to be seen.

In contrast to these poets of Communism, Czechoslovak post-war literature has been enriched also by the works of *legionaries*, who in 1918 became famous through their resistance to the Bolsheviks. The best of these poet-legionaries are K. Medek, F. Langer, and J. Kopta. They describe in poems and novels the battles fought by the Czechoslovaks in Siberia, their lives and ways in the revolutionary surroundings in Russia. **Medek** is a poet actuated by enthusiastic patriotism and modern Hussite heroism. In his novels *The Fiery Dragon*, *The Great Days*, and *The Island of Storm* he uses concentrated diction, limiting himself to the description of various types rather than presenting a fluent story, while Kopta in *The Third Battalion* is more naturalistic in the collective descriptions of the legions. Also F. Langer is a realist. His comedy *Camel Through the Needle's Eye*, for which he received a State prize, has gained great popularity both on Czech

and German stages. All the works of these legionaries have a definite value in literature.

Contemporary Czech Drama.

The National Theatre, which from the beginning had aimed at a high artistic standard, became the home of opera and of classical and modern drama alike. All that is best in dramatic literature has been produced on its stage in a way which places it among one of the best European stages of to-day. Besides the classical Shakespeare, whose dramas and comedies are constantly on the repertoire of the National Theatre, English modern drama has been presented in Oscar Wilde, G. Bernard Shaw, J. M. Synge, J. M. Barrie, W. B. Yeats, and John Galsworthy. Also other great foreign authors, Ibsen and Strindberg, Čechov, Tolstoy, Krasinski and Slowacki, Schiller and Goethe, Calderon, Racine and Molière, Rostand and Maeterlinck are as well known in Bohemia by frequent productions of their *chef d'œuvres* as in their own countries.

The second greatest stage in Prague, the Vinohrady Municipal Theatre, has, after the first few years of musical comedy and operette, devoted its energy to the promotion of drama. Ever since Dr. Hilar took over its management in 1913 the theatre has been becoming a worthier and worthier competitor of the National Theatre. Among its best productions are again many of Shakespeare's plays, Shelley's *Cenci*, and the plays of Sheridan, Wilde, Synge, Shaw, Pinero, Arnold Bennett, and other English authors. French classical and modern drama is also at home in the Vinohrady Theatre.¹ There is also a very good dramatic theatre and opera in Brno, and since the war also in Bratislava.

Seeing that they had at their disposal the excellent National Theatre, which furthermore introduced the best of foreign dramatic literature into Bohemia, one would have expected better results from the Czech drama writers, who, with some honourable contemporary exceptions, have

¹ See the Czechoslovak number of *Choses de Théâtre*, May 1923.

seldom risen to that high level which had been achieved by Czech poets and musicians. Czech drama does not lack in a high moral purpose or in artistic ideals, but it often (as in the case of Zeyer and Vrchlický) suffers from a too-pronounced lyricism and from a lack of dramatic effect. It lies probably in the very nature of Czech literature that, despite its tendencies towards anti-romantic realism, it has remained pre-eminently lyrical and undramatic. A serious handicap lay in the manifold foreign influences which made themselves felt in Czech literature, and from which only the strongest personalities emerged strengthened and purified. The tendencies which are the most pronounced in contemporary Czech drama include individualism and Socialism, verism and symbolism, expressionism, nationalism and historicism, internationalism and pragmatism.

A vigorous impulse to modern Czech drama was given by Jaroslav Hilbert (born 1871), whose realism has its roots in Ibsen and Čechov. His plays (*The Fist*, *The Play of Love and Death*, *Autumn*, etc.) deal generally with the life of the Czech middle classes, while in his historical drama *Falkenstein* and his "dramatic poem" on Christopher Columbus Hilbert succeeds in translating his own feelings and ideas through the medium of historical pictures, written clearly and logically. Later, Hilbert attempted to solve dramatically philosophical problems. To these dramas belongs the play *About God*, and especially his latest work, *The Other Shore*, which on account of its topical interest deserves to be known also outside Bohemia. The story deals with an old Communist leader, who implants his ideas into his young son so thoroughly that he becomes a fanatic and assassinates a Prime Minister at the command of the Communist Party. He is sentenced to death, and its approach stirs in him his conscience, which makes him doubt whether the deed he committed was really as heroic as he thought it was. Finally he awakens to the consciousness of the existence of God, of greater forces than man that rule this world, and feels that "on the other shore" eternity is awaiting him. His father, a hardened materialist, refuses to be moved by the news of his son's conversion to religion,

but when he hears the tolling of the passing bell, announcing his son's execution, he too becomes struck with a belief in the presence of God, falls on his knees, and prays for the salvation of his son's soul. The subject presents obvious dangers, which the author fortunately avoids by alluding to the political questions involved as little as possible. The philosophic and religious question is not perhaps developed with sufficient conviction, yet the play is not without strong dramatic effects, and does not fail to impress the audience with the force of its argument.

As a Radical Nationalist Victor **Dyk** preaches against the passivity of Slav character as revealed in the creed of the Bohemian Brethren in his *Messenger*, dealing with the events of the Thirty Years' War. *Don Quixote* is intended to prove that a dream when realized takes the form of banal reality. Dyk wrote also a trilogy on the French Revolution. A talented playwright is the legionary F. **Langer**. His *St. Venceslas* is a dramatic meditation on national history, while in *Millions* he attempts to present a criticism of Capitalism. His most popular play remains, however, the comedy, *The Camel Through the Needle's Eye*.

Modern historical drama found an able exponent in Arne **Dvořák** (1880), who built on Jirásek's tradition, but who, like Hilbert, Victor Dyk, Maria, and Krejčí, developed considerably the heroic style, and tried to symbolize in the *dramatis personæ* the spiritual forces which underlay the great movements of Bohemian history. His first plays from Czech mythology, *Přemysl and Libuše* and *Kníže* (*The Prince*), and especially his *Hussites* and *Venceslas IV*, are all historical plays of first order. The best perhaps is the last-named play, dealing with the tragedy of a democratic Czech king, and at the same time analysing questions of dogma, faith, and conscience which led to the Hussite movement. In his latest drama on *The Battle of the White Mountain* (1924) Arne Dvořák has, it seems, failed to materialize his artistic ideals. His aim was to symbolize the collective movement and the national, social, and religious factors which brought about the national catastrophe, but the way in which he carried out this idea is neither historically accurate nor dramatically effective.

Dvořák blamed the catastrophe, in the first place, on the Czech lords as leaders of the revolution, because they were unwilling to sacrifice their social privileges and to grant the peasants personal freedom. Such a one-sided explanation is obviously unconvincing. But the real failure of the play lies in its dramatic weakness. The Catholic Church and its authoritative strength is symbolized through Lamormain, who appears on the stage as a common wicked Jesuit, the Habsburgs are represented by Mathyas and Ferdinand, both of whom are drawn as bigoted cowards, and the personality of Komenský, who has to represent the promise of a better future for the Czechs, is reduced to a veritable caricature. Komenský watches with apparent indifference the events that take place around him, and the only philosophic utterance which he presents us with is a constant assurance that "everything is good."

To the same category as Arne Dvořák belongs Otakar **Fischer**, who draws inspiration for his dramas from more distant periods of history, emphasizing the social tendency. His first play, *The Přemyslides*, was produced during the war. Soon followed *Hercules* and *The World Horologe*. His latest play, *The Slaves*, was produced for the first time in Prague on March 13, 1925, and is by far the best of Fischer's plays, both dramatically and technically. The story is a social, revolutionary drama of ancient Rome. The slaves, lead by Spartacus, revolt against Rome in the year 73 B.C. Spartacus is not presented to us as a great military leader, however, but rather as an idealistic dreamer of liberty. The revolt fails because it has recourse to the same despotic methods as the enemy, and the restoration of order by Rome in the end appears, therefore, more as a salvation than as a tragedy. The moral of the play is obvious. The same tragic end of social efforts is also the leading idea of his earlier dramas: in *The Přemyslides* an anarchist, Peter Lom, assassinates the last king of the Přemysl dynasty because he hates all kings as despots on principle. *Hercules* was an enemy of the gods, who at the request of Antaia's slaves went to smite their common oppressor. And in *The World Horologe* the hero wishes to bring about the brotherhood of all nations

and social justice in the same way as Spartacus, who wanted to reverse the social order in favour of all oppressed and disinherited. On the whole Socialism serves the author, however, more as æsthetic means for achieving greater dramatic effect than as an object in itself.

A symbolic writer is Stanislav **Lom**. In *Honza* he personified the good-natured character of the Czech peasant, while in *The Chief* his hero, Moise, expounds the national idea in search of God. He admonishes his countrymen to follow the national ideal of independence, and to ignore the efforts of Austria to divert their attention from national to material, selfish interests: "Better fall on the threshold of a better national future than live in luxury in order to satisfy one's selfish needs, thereby betraying the national cause." In *Děvín* Lom uses a mythological legend to show the elemental qualities of the Czech character. The national idea is also the leading idea of one of his latest plays, *Převrat* (1923, *The Revolution*), which tries to prove that the Czech national mission *sub specie æternitatis* lies in patriotism and humanitarianism. This play, dealing with the bloodless Czech revolution of October 28, 1918, suffers, however, from an excessive number of characters and from a lack of dramatic congruity. His last play deals with the tragedy of John Žižka.

An example of the Italian influence on Czech drama is Jaroslav **Maria**, who, especially in his *Trilogy of Ferrara*, likes to indulge in semi-obscure outlines of the times and characters. In *The Twilights of the Ages* he made a bold attempt at presenting a trilogy on the times at the end of the nineteenth century by contrasting the physical world with the abstract and spiritual. His plays are well meant and well written, but they are dramatically unfinished. Among other playwrights we may mention F. V. **Krejčí**, who tries to promote the Socialist idea through the medium of drama. His best work deals with the anti-Reformation period (*Midnight*). His works appear, however, somewhat commonplace. Also the eminent critic F. X. **Šalda** has, on the whole, failed to carry out his artistic ideals in practice. His plays have a touch of Ibsen's realism and show him to be a great idealist and moralist, but his realism

sometimes borders on the grotesque and trivial, and thus loses in dramatic effect. Artistically related to S. K. Neumann is F. **Šrámek**, a witty writer, who through his anti-militaristic parody of old Austria (*Hagenbeck*) gained great success. His other comedies are souvenirs from his youth (*A Month on the River*), a satire on the bigotry of old age called *The Weeping Satyr*, and a clever dialogue play, *From the Law Courts*. His plays are written in a light, lyrical, and even idyllic style, with many detailed side-shows.

A talented drama writer is Jiří **Mahen** (born 1882), whose plays *Janošík* and *The Deserter* are of a high literary value. *Janošík* is a drama on the popular Slovak Robin Hood legend. This simple peasant-hero, whom his parents sent to study theology, revolts against the Magyar gentry, because they killed his father, whose death he avenges as a leader of a band of robbers. After several dramatic scenes, in one of which Janošík saves his sweetheart from the hands of a lustful magnate, he is finally hunted down and executed. The play is dramatically very effective, and has also many poetic scenes of the picturesque local atmosphere with gypsy bands, folk-songs, and dances. In *The Deserter* Mahen relates the story of a Czech who, during the war, "deserts" the hated Austrian ranks, and for a long time successfully evades his persecutors. In this play, which also ends tragically, there are no romantic decorative surroundings and no erotic plots as in *Janošík*, but the realism of the story is combined with abstract symbolism. Two fairies, a golden and a silver mask, representing the genius of life and the genius of earth, from time to time appear in order to explain what is happening within the hero's soul. Mahen's facile, clear, and dramatic style contrasts singularly with the generally oppressive atmosphere of his plays.¹

It is perhaps unnecessary to explain to English readers in great detail the merits of Karel **Čapek**, which they could judge for themselves from the two of his plays produced in London, *R.U.R.* and *The Insect Play*. Čapek's plays are at once deeply philosophic and vitally dramatic. Although

¹ Another author of grotesquely realistic and morbidly visionary plays is John **Bartoš** (*Lovers*, *The Haunted House*, *Ravens*, *Heroes of To-day*).

his world outlook is typically Czech, his plays are decidedly a sound reaction against the tradition of nationalism and historicism in the direction of internationalism. This object of modern internationalism Čapek tries at all costs to achieve by using phantastic, Utopian, sensational themes for expounding his philosophy. And it is not to be wondered at that his plays have scored such a tremendous success in England and America, considering that in his philosophy Čapek is foremost an adherent of Anglo-American pragmatism, as he himself admits in his work on "Pragmatism as a Philosophy of Practical Life."

The founder of pragmatism was an American, Charles Sanders Pierce, who in 1878 declared in the *Popular Science Magazine* that the only object of thought was to produce faith or conviction, or to introduce customs for action. In order to find the meaning of a thought it is sufficient to find out what customs it produces. Since then pragmatism as a democratic philosophy of the young, the strong, and the virile, as a philosophy of life, creation, and possibilities, has been developed in England by William James, John Dewey, and F. C. S. Schiller, and its spirit has been endorsed also by A. W. Moore, Armstrong, H. W. Stuart, J. E. Russell, and H. G. Wells. A line must be drawn, however, between pragmatism in the wider sense of the word and the vigorous, empirical pragmatism in the strict sense of the word, which is not so much a philosophic creed as a philosophic method. Pragmatism as a method looks foremost to facts and practical consequences of given theories. The truth of our thoughts lies in their capacity of being carried out in practice. Truth is, further, everything which may for certain reasons be considered as good. Truth is, therefore, something which is formed in the course of our experience in the same way as health, fortune, or strength. Truth lies in the knowledge as to what is most expedient for our behaviour. Pragmatism is, therefore, concerned more with the recognition than with the cognition of truth. But it goes farther than positivism, because it recognizes not only those empiric facts which have been established by science, but also other facts based on practical experience, needs, and aspirations. The truth

of these facts lies in their utility in practical life. The nominalism and relativism of cognition then disappears. Truth does not mean anything real, it becomes something practically real: real work, real gain, or real value. The aim of pragmatism is to strive for that truth which means the increase and creation of life, which is carried out as a certain good, and which forms our good actions in life. Every philosophy serves the solution of a crisis or a conflict. Pragmatism as an optimistic faith in work and in practical values was born in the busy modern age, suffering from scepticism and depression resulting from materialistic egotism. Pragmatism wants to inspire us with higher ideals, to show us that we must seek in work more than egoistic material gains, because in work lies the truth and all the positive moral values in life and salvation, if only we lead life in the right spirit.

This philosophy inspires Čapek's plays, and in it also lies the secret of their moral value, enhanced artistically by a good dramatic composition. The phantastic ideas which Čapek uses in order to achieve his purpose are secondary and not always original, whether it is the idea of manufactured human workers, or the idea of insects symbolizing various classes and types of humanity, or the idea of a woman who knows the secret of how to prolong her life indefinitely. In all these plays Čapek is a humanitarian, a good psychologist, and a good technician. In *R.U.R.* he speculates on the thought of what would happen if our era of industrialism would end in producing human machines (the robots), deprived of human feelings and standardized *ad absurdum*. These robots finally destroy "man, the parasite," and humanity is only saved from extinction because two of the robots, a male and a female, begin to feel as human beings, find their souls, and fall in love with each other. The *Insect Play* is the joint work of Karel Čapek and his brother Joseph, who is the author of another phantastic play, the *Land of Many Names*: a new part of the world arises out of the depth of the ocean to become at first the land of promise for the over-populated world, and then the cause of universal ruin. In the *Insect Play* the Čapeks describe in turn the folly of the life of the idle

rich, of wars, of the materialistic middle class, and of Socialist demagoguery. The most dramatic is the scene where the slavish ant-workers are made to work and toil in order to be finally made to fight against their fellow-ants by the ant-drivers, who inflame them with fiery speeches about national prestige, economic interests, and the rights of nationalities. The middle scene, too, is amusingly symbolic of the narrow middle classes. Čapek's ideas are represented by Mr. and Mrs. Beetle, grotesquely concerned about their property, by "comrade" Parasite, preaching equality and the abolishment of Capitalism, but at the same time unscrupulously egoistic and unwilling to work himself, and by the idealist Chrysalis, immured in her husk like a mummy in its case, and proclaiming to the world that something immense, unbounded, will happen. "What do you call great?" asks the Christopher Sly-Tramp. "To be born, to live." A few moments later Mayflies promise her life eternal. She becomes a moth, whirls into the light to proclaim the mystery which is behind both man and insect, but suddenly falls down dead. "Life is a rapture to them and death is a rapture," says the tramp. The same idea underlies also Čapek's *Case of Macropulos*, through which he demonstrates how desolate and melancholy life would be were we able to prolong it indefinitely. It is in the very character of Čapek's plays that they lack in proper realism, owing to their symbolic and philosophic tendency; nevertheless they are dramatic and show Čapek to be a deep psychologist, an optimistic pragmatist, an ardent pacifist and idealist, whose chief faith lies after all in that humanism which inspired all the greatest Czech thinkers.

B. SLOVAK LITERATURE.

Traditions of Slovak Literature.

The downfall of the Great Moravian Empire and the conquest of Slovakia by the Magyars had far-reaching consequences. While the proper history of Bohemia only then began, the life and fate of Slovakia were firmly bound up with the history of Hungary for 900 years, i.e. ever since

the accession of St. Stephen to the throne of Hungary in 1001. The establishment of Hungary meant not only the division of the single Czechoslovak nation, living up to then in Greater Moravia, but it meant a subjection of the Slovaks to an alien rule which for centuries arrested their spiritual progress and which up to the present day has left traces in the low standard of Slovak civilization. During some 800 years, which Professor Krčmery calls "the dumb, fruitless centuries," the Slovaks merely vegetated, oppressed on the one hand by feudalism which gave the property of the land to a few magnates and deprived the rest of the population of individual freedom, and on the other hand stifled by the exclusive use of Latin in higher schools which allowed the native idioms to survive, yet offered no opportunities for the development of popular literature and of spiritual life in general. The Tartar and Turkish invasions only accentuated this desolate state of affairs.

It is not surprising that Czech influence, whenever it penetrated into Slovakia, had always a salutary effect. Impetus to spiritual life was supplied specially by the Prague University, attended also by Slovaks, and, above all, by Hussitism, which brought Czech books into Slovakia. The literary Czech language of those days hardly differed from Slovak, and presents a curious analogy even to-day with the modern Slovak dialects, probably because Slovak has not developed as much as Czech.¹ At the end of the fifteenth century and in the sixteenth century Czech became even the official language in Slovakia, and was used in administration, diplomacy, and among the gentry. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the Slovaks had also some eminent scientists, of whom we may mention at least Jessenius and Benedikti. John Jessenius (Jesenský) was one of the most famous surgeons of his time, and was executed, as the Rector of the Prague University, among the other leaders of the Czech revolution, after the battle of the White Mountain. Vavřinec Benedikti was an eminent philologist, who wrote a Czech grammar and who exhorted

¹ V. Chaloupecký, in his book on Slovakia (Bratislava, 1923), contends that Czech and Slovak were identical up to the middle of the thirteenth century, when Slovak dialects began to develop in some parts in consequence of the arrival of colonizers from Poland and Russia.

his fellow-countrymen to greater patriotism in the following words: "I must admonish my Slovak brethren who show in the upkeep of their tongue the greatest negligence, so that some not only do not read any Czechoslovak books, but even boast of not possessing any. Hence results that when they speak of their own affairs they must take recourse to the Latin language."

Just as in Bohemia, Protestantism planted firm roots also in Slovakia, and as the Habsburg anti-Reformation was less vigorous in Hungary than in "heretic" Bohemia, Protestant tradition remained strong among the Slovaks up to the modern times. The influence of Protestantism on the spiritual life of the Slovaks was considerable. Ever since the fifteenth century Protestants built schools where instruction was given in Czech, so that at the end of the sixteenth century almost every community in Slovakia had a Protestant school. After the battle of the White Mountain Slovakia became the refuge of Czech emigrants, and the *Bible of Kralice* remained a cherished treasure in many a Slovak home. This Protestant tradition explains the fact that at the end of the eighteenth century at least one-fourth of the Slovaks still remained Protestant. Although a minority, the Protestant section of the Slovaks was in many respects superior to the Catholics, chiefly because it never ceased to cultivate the literary (Czech) language. Similar social and political conditions in Slovakia and in Bohemia gave rise to a similar nationalist revival. The ground was, indeed, in many ways more favourable in Slovakia than in Bohemia. It is only due to the slower general development of civilization in Hungary and to the vigorous and senseless oppression of the Slovaks by the Magyars that the Slovaks remained so backward later, while the Czechs progressed rapidly. The Slovaks had some excellent authors even in the eighteenth century, especially in the Protestant clergymen Daniel Krman and Matěj Bel. The former was a man of unimpeachable character, rare eloquence, and patriotism, who wrote scientific books on the Slav question (*Rudimenta Grammaticæ Slavicæ, De Slavorum Origine, Agenda Ecclesiastica Slavonica*). Matěj Bel, on the other hand, devoted himself to history and geography.

The beginning of the nineteenth century found the Slovaks divided into two rival camps: the Protestants, centred in Bratislava, and the Catholics, with their centre in Trnava. This antagonism later subsided in the face of Magyar tyranny, but the religious question remained until to-day one of the most burning problems of Slovakia, where the general standard of civilization and education among the peasants is still very low and where religion still remains a deeply felt living force. During the hateful Magyar regime it was often only in church that the poor Slovak peasant could use his own native tongue and seek consolation.

The *Catholic* Slovaks founded the "Learned Slovak Society" in 1793, and were generally under the reactionary influence of the Jesuit seminary in Trnava. They were not so conversant with Czech as the Protestants, who employed Czech in church and in whom the Czech Hussite tradition lived strong. It is, therefore, natural that the idea of using the local Slovak idiom as a literary language was first conceived by a Catholic priest, A. **Bernolák** (1762-1813). His difficulty consisted in the dilemma as to which of the several Slovak dialects to choose for this purpose. Having but little contact with the people, and lacking also in scientific authority, his effort to adopt the Western dialect failed. There are also some doubts as to the purity of his motives, because he himself tells us that he wrote his Slovak dictionary so that "Magyar might spread more rapidly throughout Slovakia" and the "Czech influence" be better counteracted. Bernolák did not find many adherents among the Slovaks at first, and even the great poet **Ján Hollý** (1785-1849), who wrote in Slovak hexameters, was under the obvious influence of Kollár. Besides compiling translations of Homer and Virgil, Hollý wrote poems about Svatopluk, Cyril and Methodius, and about Slavdom, in which he followed classic examples and Kollár's philosophy. Like Herder and Kollár, he idealized the ancient Slavs as peaceful peasants, but his works show a lack of dramatic sense and of psychology. His best book is called *Selanky*, and deals, like the later works of Kukučín and Hviezdoslav, with the life of the Slovak peasant as a subject of art.

The *Protestants* were organized in the "Society of Slovak Literature," and their centre was since the days of Matěj Bel the Lyceum in Bratislava. They also published a newspaper as early as 1783 (*Prešpurské Noviny*). Their leaders were **Kollár** and **Šafařík**, who took an eminent part in the Czech regeneration, and, above all, **J. Palkovič**, who as Professor at Bratislava developed a great scientific activity. The Tolerance Patent of Joseph II enabled the Protestants to write freely and their first books had a natural tendency towards religious pietism. The Protestants, especially Kollár and Šafařík, were against the introduction of a Slovak literary language, nevertheless Šafařík recommended, in a letter written to Kollár in 1827, that the Slovaks ought to develop a literary style of their own in order to create and popularize national literature.

An understanding between the Catholic and Protestant Slovaks was reached already in 1834, when a common Slovak organization was formed with Kollár at the head, but the final amalgamation of all Slovak forces took place at the instigation of Štúr and his friends. It was a natural consequence of the oppression by the Magyars, who no sooner became themselves conscious of their own nationality than they began to suppress the nationalism of the other races inhabiting former Hungary. In 1843 was abolished the Seat of Slovak Literature at the Bratislava Lyceum, occupied after Palkovič by Štúr. The Magyarizing efforts of Count Zay in religious affairs and Kossuth's persecutions only contributed further towards the closing of Slovak ranks.

Slovak Separatism.

The common idea which united the Slovaks was the use of Slovak as a literary language. This step was taken by Ludevít **Štúr** (1815-1856), himself a Protestant, with the object of rousing the Slovaks from their slumber and uniting them in a common struggle against Magyarism. It provoked opposition from the older leaders (Kollár, Šafařík), and bitter recriminations from the Czechs, who saw in it a useless division of forces. They argued that philologically speaking

this step had no justification, because Slovak is a mere dialect of Czech. In Moravia, where several dialects exist, including also the Slovak in South-Eastern Moravia, Czech is employed in schools, literature, and life generally. The Czechs argued that the Slovaks are too few and without historic traditions, and unable, therefore, to rely on their own forces. This literary separatism did in fact lead to a regrettable estrangement between the two branches of the Czechoslovak nation, and besides the Magyar oppression, is chiefly responsible for the retarded progress of Slovak literature, which had deliberately deprived itself of the sound influence of Czech intellectual life. Politically, too, it had unfortunate results, which are felt by the young Republic even to-day.¹ And yet the present staunchest advocate of Slovak autonomy, Father Hlinka, declared in 1908, when being tried for treason by the Magyars in Bratislava: "Whether the Magyars like it or not, the fact remains that the Slovaks and the Czechs form but one race, one civilization, and one nation."

On the other hand, in justice to the Slovaks it must be said that Štúr's reform had its *raison d'être* at the time. The great bulk of the Slovaks consisted, and still consists, of uneducated peasants, owing to the neglected state of education under the Hungarian regime. The two and a half millions of Slovaks had before the war only 244 public schools. The other public schools and all the secondary schools were exclusively Magyar. Seton-Watson estimates the number of educated and nationally conscious Slovaks at from 750 to 1,000. In view of this lack of education, Slovak nationalism could only be kept up through books, and books written in the local dialect and dealing with local affairs were naturally more accessible than Czech books. And while it is true that Slovak literature is not as advanced to-day as Czech literature, it has nevertheless produced some works which make good use of the beauties of the Slovak language, and reproduce well the original local colour of Slovakia and the psychology of its peasants. It has been once said that if Ruskin had wanted to find a country where art formed a part of the life of the people he would

¹ See Dr. Seton-Watson's *New Slovakia* (Prague, 1924).

have had to go to Slovakia. Few countries in Europe offer, indeed, a more grateful subject of study to ethnographers and artists than Slovakia with its picturesque, richly coloured costumes and beautiful embroideries and pottery, with its hand-painted houses and furniture, with its sagas, ballads and proverbs, and with its inexhaustible wealth of folk-songs. The melodious Slovak dialect has in poetry the same charm for the Czech ear as the melancholy Slovak folk-tunes, reflecting the true Slav spirit, unspoiled by civilization. In Slovakia still lives the Slav spirit and soul of the Czechoslovak race, and it is no doubt in Slovakia's natural wealth of folk-lore and artistic talents where Czechoslovak art will in future look for inspiration and rejuvenation.

The ideas which inspired Slovak literature were few. Slovak authors for a long time preserved Kollár's romantic outlook, his Utopian pan-Slavism combined with a mystic faith in Russia. Ludevít Štúr himself depended philosophically on Hegel, formally and spiritually on Kollár. With the exception of a study on folk-songs Štúr's writings are mediocre, lacking both in imagination and in historical accuracy. His chief activities were devoted to the political awakening of the masses and to the accomplishment of literary separatism. Štúr began to write in Slovak in the *Slovenské Noviny* and Hurban in the *Nitra* in 1844; but the final acceptance of the new Slovak literary language by all the Slovak intellectuals dates since 1846, when Štúr's work on *Slovak Dialects* was published together with the *Grammar of the Slovak Language*. In the eventful year of 1848 Štúr was the editor of the *Narodnie Noviny*, deputy to the Budapest Parliament, and delegate to the Slav Congress in Prague. Together with M. Hurban and M. Hodža he took an active part in the armed resistance of the Slovaks against Kossuth, in whom he saw an exponent of Magyarism and an enemy of constitutionalism; but the Habsburgs recompensed the Slovaks badly for their loyalty to them by leaving them completely at the mercy of the Magyars. Slovak newspapers were suppressed, the Magyar electoral law imposed, providing that the knowledge of Magyar was a necessary condition for suffrage right, and

for ten following years all literary activity in Slovakia ceased to exist. The best known of Štúr's contemporaries and friends were: Miloslav **Hurban** (1817-1888), who wrote lyric poetry as well as prose, the best of his works being an historical story from the fourteenth century called *Olejkár* and a realistic story from contemporary life called *Slovak Pupils*, and Miloslav **Hodža** (1811-1870), who died abroad in consequence of Magyar persecutions suffered for having upheld the independence of Slovak Protestants. His patriotic and religious poems are of small literary value.

The most talented Slovak poet of this period was O. **Sladkovič** (1820-1872), a Hegelian, in whose lyrico-epic poems we may discover distinct traces of the influence of Puškin and Byron. His poem "Marina" is deeply religious and pan-Slavistic, dealing with an allegorical story of a girl disappointed in love. A great epic poem founded on local tradition is "Detvan," through which Sladkovič proclaimed his faith in Slovakia's soul in quietly lyrical verses. Other epic poems deal with subjects taken from Yugoslav history. Sladkovič incurred the censure of his contemporaries for "immorality," which in reality was no more than sentimental romanticism. A healthy realistic tendency happily counterbalances his romanticism and one-sided, empty pan-Slavism.

Janko **Král** (1822-1876) and Ján **Botto** (1829-1881) wrote ballads and romances, disclosing an intimate knowledge of the mentality and morals of the Slovak peasant. They contain fine descriptions of Nature as the work of God, and are not without a certain literary value. Janko Král, a lawyer by profession, was a wandering and adventurous character, and his somewhat gloomy poems, full of melancholy resignation, show him to be a romantic. Botto's most famous work deals with the popular Slovak ballad about Janošik, and bears traces of Mácha's Byronism. His poems are elegiac and descriptive, but the verse is melodious. Samo **Chalupka** (1812-1883) has a great deal in common with Král and Botto, but his epic poems from ancient Slav history remind us more of the terse style of Erben than of Mácha's Byronism. The best works of all these Slovak

poets were written after 1860, when the worst persecutions subsided, and when also the first Slovak novels began to appear.

Second Period.

After 1860 the same high hopes in progress were entertained by the Slovaks as in Bohemia by the Czechs. Although the humble petition which the Slovaks presented to the Emperor in 1849 remained without effect, Slovak leaders met again in 1861 in Svatý Martin in order to present the Emperor with a new memorandum demanding safeguard of their national rights, especially in schools. Their postulates were not granted, but the Emperor allowed them at least to form a scientific and literary organization, the **Matica Slovenská**, in 1863, which under the leadership of Bishop Moyses developed important activities and published collections of folk-songs and proverbs, as well as novels, poems, and scientific books. The *Matica* was in favour of an understanding and union with the Czechs and rejected abstract pan-Slavism, nevertheless it was opposed to cosmopolitanism, social realism and individualism. Kollár's romantic tradition prevailed, and thus Slovak literature, with very few exceptions, degenerated in a rigid conservatism, characterized by an aversion against "Western culture," by epigonism and naïve romanticism. Slovak poets as a rule emphasized their racial affinity with other Slavs, and chose their subjects from Yugoslav, Russian, and Polish history, but at the same time they cherished rather inconsistently a distrust in the Czechs, whose history they ignored and whose influence they resented.

The best writer of realistic stories was Janko **Kalinčák** (1822-1871), influenced by Byronism and by Polish literature. His historical stories and his realistic stories from contemporary Slovak life contain many plastic descriptions and are not devoid of humour. Typical is his story, *Restoration*, on Magyar elections. Short plays and comedies were written by Jan Chalupka and Jan Palarík. An attempt at a great semi-historical, semi-symbolical drama was made by V. **Pauliny-Tóth** (1826-1877) in *The Human Comedy*, which turned out to be a failure from the point of

view of art. A good historical play from the times of Jiskra's expedition to Slovakia (*Valgatha*) was written by L. Kubany (1830-1869), but unfortunately the historical truth is distorted by a false political tendency of a presumed reconciliation between Magyars and Czechoslovaks. Kubany wrote also a story on the Polish princess Radziwil, while other authors (Palarík, Záborský, Kellner-Hostinský) sought their subjects in Russian history and literature.

The literature of the second period brought very few new ideas or forms, yet it meant a distinct improvement and a promise for the future. But before it could develop further alongside with Czech literature new persecutions set in and arrested its progress. The Hungarian law of nationalities which followed the establishment of dualism guaranteed the rights of national minorities on paper, but proclaimed also Magyar as the only State language and emphasized the unity of Hungary. What this meant in practice was soon revealed by the consistent efforts of even the most moderate Magyars to impose the Magyar language and "civilization" on others with the object of extirpating the nationalities, forming half of the population, and of making of Hungary "a national Magyar State." Banffy declared in 1906: "The interests of Hungary demand that a national Magyar State be founded on the basis of the most uncompromising chauvinism." The methods used by the Magyars to this end are described in detail in Mr. Seton-Watson's *Racial Problems in Hungary* and in Ernest Denis' *Les Slovaques*. The conception of political morals and democracy did not exist for the Magyars, and so Hungary soon became the last stronghold of aristocratic oligarchy. Gladstone rightly called the Magyar civilization a second-hand civilization. Underneath was hidden despotic barbarism. The Magyar electoral law made one Magyar vote equal to about one hundred Slovak, Rumanian, or Croatian votes, so that the nationalities were practically unrepresented in the Budapest Parliament. What sort of "liberty" existed in Hungary is illustrated by the case of Juriga, one of the two Slovak deputies before the war, who in 1906 was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for "disrespecting the Government" through speeches criticizing Magyar methods of chauvinism.

It is obvious that under such conditions Slovak intellectual life could not progress. In 1874 and 1875 the three Slovak secondary schools, which had only existed a few years, were closed down. All societies, the *Matice* among them, were suppressed and their funds confiscated. Slovak students in the Magyar University were not allowed to speak in their own tongue among themselves. Slovak journals were either suppressed or else systematically persecuted. Everything aimed at the extirpation of the Slovak language and nationality. The number of educated Slovaks was always small, and it is not surprising that a great depression set in in their ranks when the old leaders began to die out and no new leaders were forthcoming. They became again addicted to a fatalistic, mystic belief in Russia, who either would not or could not help. They dreamt of the greatness of the Slav world and its future, regarding themselves as the centre of the imaginary new European constellation. With the Czechs pan-Slavism was little more than a passing illusion, tempered by common sense and realism, but with the Slovaks it seems to have developed into a regular obsession which prevented them from seeing things as they were. Their literature had no Havlíček and no Neruda. Their distrust of the Czechs did not even then subside, despite the fact that the Czech intellectuals of the eighties cherished sincere sympathies for Slovakia, which they studied zealously. Many Czech authors, including Němcová, Heyduk, Pokorný, Holeček and Kálal, took gratefully their subjects from Slovakia in a sincere attempt at a closer understanding with it. They obtained a certain satisfaction in the fact that the greatest modern Slovak poet, Hviezdoslav, learned a great deal from the Czech poets, and became a warm advocate of Czechoslovak unity.

The spiritual life of Slovakia at the end of the nineteenth century was stifled, but not dead. National feelings were kept up by a few Slovak patriots who published the *Narodnie Noviny* and the *Slovenské Pohliady*, and who gathered round the two great modern Slovak poets, Országh-Hviezdoslav and Hurban Vajanský.

Modern Slovak Literature.

Pavel Országh-Hviezdoslav (1849-1922), the heir of Sladkovič, is undoubtedly Slovakia's greatest poet, and his work has more than a merely local interest. Brought up in Magyar schools, he wrote his first poems in Magyar under Petöfi's influence, but he did not forget his Slovak origin, and when he grew up he regained his national consciousness and began to write in Slovak. His first poems, formally influenced by Sladkovič's "Marina" and partly also by Kollár's works, show his powers of imagination in interesting allegories. His lyrics reflect faithfully his soul, while his epics, the greatest of which is called *Hájdníkova Žena* (*The Gamekeeper's Wife*) are written in a sonorous, rich verse, reminiscent of Svatopluk Čech. Very often Hviezdoslav uses Biblical, prophetic pictures when raising his voice to express his warm patriotism. The story of *The Gamekeeper's Wife* is rather conventional: A gamekeeper's wife is, in her husband's absence, molested by a country squire, whom she murders in self-defence, but, after being discharged by the jury, returns to her husband in order to live with him an idyllic life. The value of the work lies chiefly in the beautiful descriptions of Nature, in ethnographic details, and in the lyric parts with a religious and moral background. Hviezdoslav's poems devoted to his wife reveal his sensitive spirit, but are never erotic. His best works were written after 1880. The *Psalms and Hymns* express his grief at his nation's sufferings, but contain also a hope in the future: "Truth has been crucified, but the time shall come when it will rise from the dead, and holy as the reverend and silent Sun it will sit on the throne, seizing the reins of government of might and right in its just hands." Biblical subjects were generally his favourites (Agar, Cain, Rachel, Solomon's Dream, etc.). Also his tragedy on *Herodes and Herodias*, the greatest Slovak drama as yet written, deals with a Biblical subject. During the war Hviezdoslav wrote the *Sanguinary Sonnets*, inspired by the terror of war and condemning the duplicity of Christian mankind which in contrast to Christian principles did not shrink from shedding torrents of blood. Of considerable value are also Hviezdoslav's translations of

Hamlet, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Puškin's *Boris Godunov*, the dramas of Mickiewicz, Slowacki, Schiller, Goethe, etc. In all his works Hviezdoslav was a great master of form, but his mentality remained that of a simple Slovak, religiously believing that a man's duty, assigned to him by God, is to work. His poems are imbued with symbolic Slav Messianism and romanticism, but also with a deep psychology, for he knew how to translate human sufferings into strength and prophetic hope. In his somewhat heavy verse, in rich metaphors and descriptive lyricism, he resembles chiefly Svatopluk Čech. As a character Hviezdoslav was loved by all who came into contact with him, and, excepting the Magyars, he had no enemies either as a man or as a poet.

Svetozar **Hurban-Vajanský** (1847-1916) was a lawyer, and later editor of the *Narodnie Noviny*. Vajanský was influenced by Russian literature (Puškin, Tolstoy, Turgeněv), and as a conservative in outlook and temperament continued in the footsteps of Štúr. He wrote no erotic poetry, his whole work being devoted to the cause of his nation. His proud character felt intensely the sufferings of his people, for whom he saw salvation in the greatness of the future of the Slavs. This great consciousness of his Slovak nationality and his faith in Russia pervades all his works. The best of his poems are gathered in the *Tatry a More* (*Tatra Mountains and the Sea*), written after a stay at the Yugoslav seaside. In the choice of their subjects they remind us of Krásnohorská, in style of Heyduk and Vrchlický. Better than his poetry is considered his prose, which includes Turgeněv-like descriptions of Nature, and semi-realistic stories from the political and social life of the Slovak *intelligentsia*, from the struggles between "fathers and children."

If Vajanský learnt from Turgeněv, Slovakia's best realistic writer, Martin **Kukučín** (born 1860) learnt from Gogol. He was first active as a doctor of medicine in Slovakia, then in Dalmatia, and since 1907 in South America. His realism had a certain native tradition to build upon. Tablic described the small gentry, Hollý the shepherds, Sladkovič the peasants ("Detvan)," and Kalinčák,

Hviezdoslav, and Vajanský too described the life and ways of the Slovaks in their books. But never before had the life of the Slovak peasant been described with greater truthfulness and with less bias and idealization than was done by Kukučín, who loves his Slovaks too well to conceal their faults. Like Neruda in Bohemia he was the precursor of the modern realistic generation, which stood up against the conservative ideas of Štúr and Vajanský. His stories from rural life are written with drastic humour and realism, free from sentimentality. In his novel *Dom v Stráni* (*A House on a Slope*) Kukučín described also his impressions from Dalmatia, and proved that, like Sladkovič and Vajanský, he knew the Jugoslavs well. Unfortunately since he left for America he has ceased to be active in literature.

Contemporary Slovak Literature.

At the end of the nineteenth century a new generation arose in Slovakia in opposition to pan-Slav conservatism. It consisted chiefly of Slovak students who at the Prague University became the disciples of T. G. Masaryk. Their chief organ, called *Hlas* (1898-1905), was edited by V. Šrobár and Pavel Blaho, and expounded modern social and political ideas in opposition to the *Narodnie Noviny*, while their review, *Prúdy*, called for literary criticism and progress. Later they published two more periodicals, the *Slovenský Obzor* and the *Nové Časy*. Besides Šrobár and Blaho the *hlasists* included several eminent politicians, journalists and authors (Milan Hodža, Bohdan Pavlu, J. Markovič, A. Štefánek, etc.). At the same time appeared the first critical history of Slovak literature by Jaroslav Vlček. The criticism of the young generation was directed against the St. Martin school of Hurban Vajanský, who was charged with fatalistic inertia in politics, economics, and literature, with abstract romanticism and empty pan-Slavism. The *hlasists* demanded a better understanding with the Czechs which would lead to the unity and independence of the Czechoslovaks, and they called for progress and regeneration founded on better education. They proclaimed Štúr's separatism to be "romantic heresy of men actuated

more by sentiment than by cold reason and realities," since there is no such thing as a separate Slovak language and nationality, the Slovaks forming but a part of the common Czechoslovak race. Nevertheless, they continued to use Slovak as their literary language, recognizing, no doubt, the fact that no reasonable Czech of to-day resents this, just because of the close proximity of Czech and Slovak, which presents no difficulties to mutual understanding.

The new generation followed generally in the footsteps of Kukučín. Tajovský, Čaják, and Timrava wrote interesting realistic stories. In Ivan **Krasko** (born 1876) Slovakia has a lyric, impressionistic poet of a melancholic outlook, who feels the unfortunate influence of slavery on the character of the Slovaks, from which he sees salvation in God and in greater patriotism. In his symbolism, learned from Western poetry, he embodied all the unrest which swayed the young generation. Another talented writer, Andrej **Bella** (1851-1903) drew inspiration chiefly from folk-poetry, while Martin **Rázus** (born 1888), a Protestant clergyman, is an individualist, even more direct and intimate in his lyric poetry than Krasko. Rázus likes to meditate on the religious, national, and social problems of Slovakia with a mystically sensitive mind. Slovak legionaries found their spokesman in J. **Jesenský**, an admirer of Puškin and a writer of sensuous and ironic poems.

On the whole, it may be said that Slovak literature, as well as Slovak music, is as yet too scanty to do full justice to the natural artistic talent and great wealth of folk-lore of Slovakia. Justifiable hopes are, however, being placed in the generation to come which will grow up under the auspices of the freedom now gained by the Czechoslovak race. The new Republic has already opened numerous public and secondary Slovak schools as well as a Slovak University, which will no doubt greatly contribute to the spiritual progress of Slovakia. Pre-war Slovak literature will, nevertheless, remain a worthy memorial of the past generations—their struggles and sufferings, their deep religious piety and humanism, their Slav enthusiasm and their great love for the local originality and hidden strength of their own country and people.

CHAPTER III

MUSIC

Musical Tradition in Bohemia.

IN music the Czechoslovaks have probably reached their highest artistic achievement. Like Czech literature, and for similar reasons, Czech music is comparatively young, its true founder being B. Smetana (1824-1884), but it has achieved such a high degree of excellence that it compares favourably with the music of other nations. Through the music of Smetana, Dvořák, Fibich, Novák, Suk, Foerster and Janáček, and through their musical artists, Emmy Destinnová, Kubelík, Kocián, the Bohemian and Ševčík quartets, and the Moravian and Prague teachers' choirs, the Czechs have even before the war been known as one of the musically most gifted races of Europe.

The reasons for this phenomenon are several. The Czechs as Slavs have a natural talent for music, and their music has a distinctly Slav character. Those, however, who would look for any exotic elements or any Eastern influence in Czech music would be disappointed. Czech music bears, like the whole Czech civilization, a Western character. It is also amply proved by history that the Czechs were always musical. The Reformation, it is true, favoured only religious music, while the anti-Reformation suppressed all spiritual life, thus hampering also the progress of musical art. The development of music in Bohemia did not, therefore, go parallel with the development of music elsewhere—notably in England, where in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries music stood very high and produced her madrigalists, her William Byrd and Henry Purcell. Nevertheless, it is characteristic that the Czech folk-song flourished best during the darkest period of Czech history, in the eighteenth century, and that even before the Czech

national revival German, Italian, and French classicism drew many of its talents from Bohemia. Czechoslovak folk-songs supplied the Czech romantic regeneration with happy inspiration. Songs collected by Kollár, Čelakovský, Erben, Sušil, Bartoš, and Kádavý proved a rich source of inspiration for Czech music and poetry. The national revival awakened the natural Czech genius in music in the person of Smetana, the founder of Czech modern music. This fact proves, if any proof were needed, the close relationship between art and nationality. Art cannot live where nationality is oppressed, and its originality cannot develop without drawing from popular, national sources. No artist can dispense with national tradition and no artist can hope to find his own soul in complete detachment from the soul of his own people.

Even the oldest Church songs and popular songs of Bohemia show a distinct originality. The history of the ancient Slavs is obscure, yet all foreign chroniclers agree that they were musical. Songs from pagan times, in fact, survived the advent of Christianity, and were sung at religious rituals for a long time until they were suppressed by the Church. Slav Church songs were sung in Bohemia during the period of Cyril and Methodius, at the Slav monastery of Sázava and later at the Emauzy monastery at Vyšehrad, where Charles IV re-established with the Pope's consent Slav liturgy. On the whole, however, Latin liturgy prevailed. A famous choir existed in Prague already in 1255, founded by the deacon Vít, who also had a new organ erected and new hymn-books written. Music received a helpful impetus during the reign of Charles IV, who had many new churches built and favoured both ecclesiastical and secular music. Soon after Bohemia produced, under French influence, two original composers: Canon **Záviš** (1379-1408), whose pronounced rhythm, round melody, and Phrygian (minor) mode were based on popular Czech songs of those days, and Archbishop **Jan z Jenštejna**, whose music, written in the Ionic (major) mode, has a more dignified character. The most interesting examples of Czech popular Church songs from the pre-Husite period are: the hymn "*Hospodine pomiluj ny*" ("Have

mercy upon us, O Lord"), supposed to be from the tenth century, but probably composed in the twelfth century, and first noted down in 1397, sung at coronations and other festive occasions; the hymn to St. Venceslas (Svatý Václav), dating from the thirteenth century and called by chronicler Beneš in 1362 *Cantionem ab olim cantare contuetam*, and two other hymns from the fourteenth century. These four hymns were the only Czech hymns approved by the Church, and remain the only ones preserved till to-day. Besides these hymns there were songs sung at religious plays, and secular music which was both original and inspired by foreign—German, French, and Italian—influence. German minnesingers were popular in Bohemia, especially during the reign of Venceslas II, and French music, promoted by the troubadours, flourished in the fourteenth century under the Luxembourg dynasty.

The advent of *Hussitism* meant a profound penetration of Czech into ecclesiastical music. Hussite Church songs showed deep sentiment and became quickly popular. These tunes were later adopted also by the Protestants, and became developed especially by the Bohemian Brethren. Hussite tunes, especially those of the radical Taborites, show a great wealth of form and harmony (variety of modes), which is explained by the religious rigour of the Hussites. On the other hand, secular, especially dance music, and the use of instruments were for the same reason banned. Dancing was condemned by all the Hussite prophets excepting Tomáš Štítný. The most famous Hussite hymn in Dorian mode, "*Kdož jste boží bojovníci*" ("Ye who are God's warriors"), was probably composed in Žižka's camp, and its powerful rhythm and melody is no doubt the secret of the elemental force which inspired its singers, going to battle, with indomitable courage, and their opponents with such awe that they did not even wait to see the "God's warriors," but took to their heels on hearing it. The best collection of Hussite songs is that of Jistebnice from the first half of the fifteenth century. Interesting are also the satirical songs composed by both parties, especially the one called *Abeceďa*, sung by the Hussites, on Archbishop Zbyněk Zajíc, who burnt Wycliffe's books without knowing

what was in them. Many historical songs and ballads from this period have also been preserved.

Instead of the antiquated Church choirs, new **Choral Societies** (*cives litterati*) or brotherhoods now sprung up, which later adopted also polyphonic singing (*cantus figuratus*), probably under the influence of Calvinist music, especially of that by Claude Goudimel, the teacher of Palestrina. These choirs were societies organized by the townsmen themselves. It is not known exactly when they originated, but the oldest of them was perhaps the Society of the Bethlehem Chapel in Prague, where John Hus preached and which was founded in 1391. The best choirs were in Prague and Hradec Králové (founded 1505), the richest was in Litoměřice, founded at the end of the fifteenth century. The movement spread also to Slovakia and Poland. After the advent of the anti-Reformation most of these choirs perished, but many vegetated under a Catholic form until 1785, when they were suppressed by Joseph II. Their funds were used for editing gorgeous hymn-books (*kancionály*), which remained, besides the Bible, the most treasured possession of Czech emigrants after the battle of the White Mountain. They remain valuable even to-day, because they contain many historical songs, canticles, and hymns with religious texts, but with original popular Czech melodies which have in many cases been preserved in Czech folk-songs until to-day. The hymns were at first written both in Latin and in Czech, but when in 1524 Czech became the official language of the Church, Czech songs prevailed. The hymn-books (*kancionály*) were usually beautifully wrought manuscripts, but later they were also printed by each religious denomination, mostly by the energetic Bohemian Brethren. The last *kancionál* was published by Komenský in 1659 in Amsterdam. All these hymn-books were frequently translated into Polish, German and Latin, and the Germans in particular adopted many for their own. Besides the *kancionály* the Czech Protestants published also psalm-books. There was a number of composers of hymns and mass-songs. The best polyphonic compositions were by the Czech Protestant leader, Kryštof Harant z Polžic, who was executed in 1621, and

the best book of theory was written by Jan Blahoslav (*Musica*).

Humanism reconciled the Czech Reformation with secular music. Melanchthon's pupil, Matouš of Kolín (Collinus), is known for his setting of Horace's odes. An interesting example of the racial and religious toleration exercised by music was the society "*Collegium Musicum*," formed in Prague in 1616, which unfortunately ceased to exist in 1620. Its object was the cultivation of secular music, especially of madrigals, and its members included Czechs and Germans of different creeds. But the chief support to secular music was still lent by the Catholic party under the auspices of the Habsburgs. Ferdinand I founded an orchestra (*capella*) at his Court in which Dutch musicians predominated. This orchestra flourished especially under the great promoter of art, Rudolf II, and the seat of the Habsburg dominions of those days, Prague, soon became the centre of attraction for great musicians, composers, artists, and conductors from the whole of Europe. One of them was the Englishman Charles Luyton, who joined this orchestra in 1576 and who had his compositions, including a book of madrigals, published in Prague. Similar orchestras were founded also by some of the nobles—by the Rosenbergs at Krumlov, by Křištof Harant z Polžic and others. Later on Jewish bands, sanctioned by Ferdinand II in 1627, became popular. They played French and Italian music (*passamezzas, gagliardi, sarabands*) for the nobility, and popular dance music for the peasants at weddings and on other festive occasions.

In their struggle against the Reformation the Catholics used similar Church songs to those of the Protestants. Even in the sixteenth century they published hymn-books containing variations and adaptations of Hussite songs. The pompous character of their Church service prompted them to use instruments freely in church, and to produce Church plays with the aid of Renaissance and humanistic Italian music. These flourished especially after the triumph of the anti-Reformation. Foreign influence remained, nevertheless, without a sound repercussion similar to that evoked by former German and French influence, and Czech music henceforth lived for a long time only in the folk-songs of

the people. The Czech language, however, was for a long time preserved in church, and Czech musical talent did not die out. One chronicler (Dlouhoveský) mentions that in 1674 a Czech choir, 200 members strong, went to Rome and surprised everyone by the high standard of its singing as well as by the beauty of the music sung and "its simple old Czech harmonies," even though nobody could understand the Czech language in which it was sung.

Czech Contribution to Classicism and Romanticism.

Although during the period of decay under the spell of anti-Reformation original musical production did not progress in Bohemia, the contribution of Bohemia to the great era of classicism in music is not inconsiderable. The classical era of music in the eighteenth century (Bach, Handel, Haydn, Gluck, Mozart, Beethoven) was cosmopolitan, and its character cannot, therefore, be called German, even though it was composed by Germans. On the contrary, its character was equally German, French, and Italian, with the exception of the individualistic Beethoven, who in his subjective music was a true precursor of modern musical composition. It is interesting, therefore, to note that also Bohemia had, though only anonymously, her share in the development of classicism. The greatest classics not only knew and had relations with Bohemia, but sometimes even borrowed its folk-tunes. **Haydn**, a Yugoslav by origin, composed his first symphony in Lukavec, where he conducted Count Morzin's orchestra (1759). **Gluck** spent his youth in Bohemia, and received his musical education from the great organist Bohuslav Černohorský in Prague. **Mozart** was for the first time fully appreciated in Prague in 1782, and his *Figaro's Wedding* was loudly acclaimed in 1786. In the following year he stayed in Prague and composed there his *Don Giovanni*. Also his first biography was written by a Czech (F. Němeček). The Bohemian nobility (Wallenstein, Lichnovský, Lobkovic, Kinský) was also a great promoter of music and extended its favour especially to **Beethoven**, who was treated with utter ingratitude and misunderstood by Vienna. Also in roman-

ticism Bohemia had an indirect share, for Schubert's mother was Czech.

It is impossible to give a complete list of all the Czechs who as artists or composers participated in the progress of classicism and whose true nationality was usually unknown, because for the most part they lived outside Bohemia. Among the most famous was J. D. Zelenka (1679-1745), a contemporary of J. S. Bach, whose compositions were highly valued at the time. B. Černohorský (1684-1742), a master of counterpoint, lived in Prague and Padua, and brought up a number of eminent pupils, including Gluck and Tartini. F. Tuma (1704-1774) was a famous virtuoso on the viola-de-gamba and a composer. Other Czech composers of the eighteenth century were J. Mysliveček, who lived in Italy and was known as Venatorini or *il divino Boemo*, J. Zach, J. A. Seling, F. V. E. Brix, J. Koželuh, J. Praupner, J. A. Rossler-Rosetti, whose real name was Ružička, F. L. Gasman, and many others. An interesting innovation was introduced into music by George Benda (1722-1795), who lived a long time in Germany and Vienna and whose brothers and sons were also musicians. Independently of similar efforts of Rousseau, Benda introduced melodrama on the stage in the form of music in between spoken sentences. Also the famous *Mannheim School* was recruited chiefly from Bohemia. Jan Stamitz, for instance, who as a precursor of Haydn introduced the minuet into symphony, came from Bohemia, just as F. Richter, A. Filz, J. Družecký (Druzechi), and others. A well-known pianist and composer was J. Ladislav Dusík, or Dussek (1761-1812), who lived in Holland and Germany and came also to London in 1799. He introduced for the first time the singing cantilena into piano playing, and his numerous compositions form a transition between Mozart and Beethoven. Another Czech, A. Rejcha (1770-1836), a friend of Beethoven, lived a long time in Paris, composed operas and chamber music, and wrote also a great theoretical work in French. His pupils were Elwart, Dangl, and Berlioz. Among the Czech executive artists the most famous were the violinist F. Benda, the pianists Nikodim and Javůrek, the teacher of Chopin, the 'cellist Mára, etc.

Bohemia itself was a favourable ground for operatic and concert performances. The first permanent opera was built in Prague by Count Špork. Later on, Italian companies played at Kotce, in Count Thun's palace and, above all, in the theatre built by Count Nostic in 1781, which was sold to the Bohemian Estates in 1798 and still exists to-day. Besides Italian operas the most popular were operas by Gluck and Mozart, but later a decided decline set in, and the repertoire consisted only of old-fashioned Italian operas, Paer plays and plays with songs (*Singspiele*). This state of things lasted until the days of Smetana.

The first half of the nineteenth century meant a regeneration both in literature and in music. The romantics devoted their chief attention to the study of folk-lore. The study of folk-songs laid, then, the foundations of Czech national music. It behoves us, therefore, to give at least a brief outline of the character of Czechoslovak folk-songs as the natural products of the spirit of the people.

Generally speaking the *folk-songs of Bohemia* are simpler and of a somewhat different character than the more ancient folk-songs of Slovakia, while those of Moravia form a transition between the two. As in every folk-song we must distinguish between the original inspiration hidden in these songs and between diverse influences of artificial music which explain their similarity to folk-songs of other countries. Czech and especially Slovak songs are usually melancholy, but never sentimental. There are several kinds of folk-songs: dance songs, festive songs, sung at weddings, during Christmas, etc., epic songs, dealing with real history or with invented ballads, and lyric songs, on various love themes. The folk-songs of Bohemia are usually written in the major mode, though there are also examples, especially among the older songs, of melancholy tunes in the minor mode. Most of them date from the eighteenth century, but some are even of older origin. The influence of dance and instrumental music is obvious in their character and pronounced rhythm, which is both in $\frac{2}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$. Many show the influence of the minuet, of horn, clarinet, and bagpipe music. Thus arose the various Czech folk-dances (polka, furiant, etc.) which have a dis-

tingly national character and humour of their own, resembling often Polish folk-dances. (The Czech furiant and *rejdvák*, for instance, resembles the Polish mazurka or *krakowiak*.) The melody, harmony, and especially the rhythm, bear the imprint of popular art, while the texts are usually of a trivial nature.

The folk-songs of Moravia resemble generally the songs of Bohemia, but are sometimes more melancholy and sometimes again more fiery in rhythm. The songs of Moravian Slovakia in particular resemble those of Western Slovakia. The most interesting, both from the point of view of music and of poetry, are the *songs of Slovakia*.¹ While the chief value of Czech songs lies in their joyous rhythm and melody, and the words remain of secondary importance, the Slovak songs are always declamatory, the accent of the music conforming always strictly to the accent of the word, and the spirit of the music reflects faithfully the spirit of the poetic words. The rhythm, which even in dance music remains irregular and often syncopated, is invariably in $\frac{4}{4}$, seldom in $\frac{6}{4}$, and often alters in other strophes with the altered accent of the word. In ballads and many other recitative songs the rhythm remains in the background in favour of the melody, and only in dance music it becomes more pronounced and passionate. The Iambic rhythm being foreign to the Czechoslovak language, we never find an incomplete introductory bar, the *Auftakt* of the German songs. The accent is always on the first syllable of the word. From the irregular rhythm of the Slovak songs follows the difficulty of noting them down. It is estimated that the number of Slovak songs exceeds 100,000, of which about 10,000 have been collected and published. The difficulty becomes even greater when it comes to the harmonizations of these songs. Unlike the Czech songs of Moravia and Bohemia, the Slovak folk-song preserved the ancient mediæval Church modes, and besides the ordinary Ionic (major) and Æolian (minor) modes we find many songs written in the Dorian, Phrygian, and Lydian modes. This is a curious example of the conservative

¹ See R. W. Seton-Watson's *Slovak Peasant Art and Industries*. Constable, 1911.

spirit of the Slovaks and of the ancient origin of their songs. The antique scales have died out in Bohemia as well as in Germany (Lutheran hymns), but J. S. Bach still knew them and was an incomparable master in their treatment. Only in Slovak folk-songs and in some Russian songs have they survived till to-day. Sometimes the Slovak folk-songs are sung in the so-called "Magyar scale," used with great effect by F. Liszt. This scale is but a harmonic minor scale with the fourth and seventh raised so that an exaggerated interval of $1 \frac{1}{2}$ tone follows the third and the sixth. Since the earliest notations of Slovak songs do not show this scale, it must be considered as a mere recent mutilation due to the corrupt influence of the Gipsy bands. The peculiar declamatory rhythm and the antique modes impart the Slovak songs with a special charm and character. Only recently one may observe the detrimental Gipsy influence, and in exceptional cases also the influence of Magyar songs, which, however, never have the great variety of form and of internal structure of the Slovak songs. As the Magyars are less musical by nature and have borrowed many Slovak tunes for their own, it is difficult to ascertain the origin of these few songs and declare them positively as adaptations from Magyar.

The beauty of Slovak songs lies equally in their music and in their words. They deal not only with love affairs but many have the form of ballads or of historical songs, and there are also many Christmas carols, Easter songs, and songs sung at religious ceremonies of very ancient origin. Some date right back to pagan times, and deal with heathen deities and primeval customs. Others deal with the glorious epoch of Cyril and Methodius, of Rastislav and Svatopluk. The most popular of the ballads are those about the Slovak robber-hero Janošík. Most of the songs are of a melancholy character, for it was in them that the Slovak peasant found the soothing comfort for all his troubles, as well as an inspiration and a promise of a better future.

The spirit of the Czech folk-songs inspired Křížkovský, Smetana, and Dvořák, while the Slovak songs have left traces in the compositions of V. Novák and L. Janáček.

Even great foreign composers, including Brahms and Liszt, employed Slovak tunes to good effect.

Bedřich Smetana, the Founder of Czech Opera.

Before we speak of Smetana, to whom falls the lion's share in the creation of Czech national music, we must turn our attention to the musical tradition which immediately preceded his advent. Without wishing to minimize his importance, we must not forget that Smetana had not only a wealth of folk-music, but also a definite musical tradition to build upon. The ground for the development of music was not quite as unprepared as in the case of literature. Smetana's task consisted chiefly in bringing the musical level in Bohemia up to date, in making of music a living force by raising its standard and by discovering the means whereby it became national.

A "Society for Promoting Music," which organized orchestral and other concerts, was founded in Prague in 1808, and soon after, in 1811, the famous Prague Conservatoire of Music was established under the directorship of B. D. Weber, which besides the Paris Conservatoire is one of the oldest and best institutions of this kind in Europe. In 1830 was founded also a school of organists, which in 1890 became amalgamated with the Conservatoire. The greatest pianist and pedagogue of its early period was V. **Tomášek** (1774-1850), a good patriot, to whom Mozart represented the height of musical achievement, but whose compositions show, not only a national character, but an inclination already towards romanticism. Besides symphonies, piano works, operas, and chamber music, Tomášek composed also, like his predecessor Zelenka, songs in Czech. Among Tomášek's pupils were J. H. Voříšek, from 1823 Court organist in Vienna; William Kuhe, born in Prague in 1823, who since 1886 was professor at the Royal Academy of Music in London; the pianist Alexander Dreyschock, professor at Petrograd; F. Hauser, director of the Munich Conservatoire; and many others. One of Weber's pupils was the great pianist Ignatius Moscheles, from whom Fibich learnt a great deal. A famous piano school was established

in Prague in 1830 by the blind pianist Josef **Proksch** (1794–1864), the teacher and friend of Smetana. The first violin school was that of B. V. Pixi, a pupil of Viotti. Czech violinists soon became famous through J. V. Kalivoda, C. Barták, and J. Slavík, called the Czech Paganini. Thus was founded the great Czech tradition of violin playing, which later produced the famous professor Otakar Ševčík and the great violinists F. Ondříček, Jan Kubelík, Jaroslav Kocián, Karel Hoffmann, and Váša Příhoda.

Having contributed to the classic era, Bohemia, at the beginning of the nineteenth century had also her share in the romantic movement in music. The example of Chopin and Liszt had a great influence on Smetana. A progressive spirit was introduced through romanticism into the Prague Conservatoire, where it was promoted especially by J. B. Kittl, its director from 1843 to 1865, and a great admirer of Mendelssohn. Another partisan of Mendelssohn was V. J. Veit (1806–1864), who in his compositions introduced consciously melodies of Czech folk-songs. The greatest promoter of Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Wagner was, however, A. **Apt** (1815–1887). The progressive movement was stimulated also by a visit of Berlioz to Prague in 1846, and of Liszt in 1846 and 1856. Wagner's operas were first introduced in 1854, at a time when Wagner still met with bitter opposition in Germany and especially in conservative Vienna.

The romantic study of folk-songs led also to poor efforts at imitations and to their harmonization. From 1825 collections of folk-songs were published by Rittersberg, Erben, Sušil, and Bartoš. The historic development of the folk-song was traced by Professor Hostinský, and harmonizations of folk-songs were composed by Martinovský, Javůrek, L. Procházka, Pivoda, and later by J. Malát, L. Janáček, V. Novak, Jaroslav Křička, and many others.

A true precursor of Smetana was P. **Křížkovský** (1820–1885), who in his masterly settings of folk-songs for choir showed the true way of finding the spirit of national music. A member of the Augustinian Monastery in Brno, Křížkovský wrote also masses and cantatas, and his works, especially his choirs, are still popular as classical musical

gems, imbued with a sound popular spirit and harmonically effective. A similar effort was made with less success by another Moravian, A. **Tovačovský**, whose best works are arrangements of Czech and Jugoslav songs for choral singing.

The rapid progress of choral singing was assured especially since the foundation of the *Hlahol* in Prague in 1861, which was soon followed by the establishment of similar choirs all over the country. At present Czechoslovakia can boast of the finest choirs in Europe, among the most celebrated being the technically superb Choral Society of Prague Teachers, the older and equally excellent Society of Moravian Teachers, the choirs "Smetana," "Křížkovský," and many others.

Besides Křížkovský, Bohemia had another brilliant musician before Smetana in J. L. **Zvonař** (1824-1865), who may be called his true precursor. Zvonař was foremost the author of works on the theory of music, but he sought also ways for translating the Czech national spirit into music. In an interesting article written in 1863 he laid down the following principles for the guidance of Czech composers: At first it is necessary to examine if we possess sufficient material from which music as art could draw inspiration. To this question he gives an emphatic answer in the affirmative. The Czechoslovak folk-songs and Church songs contain a great wealth of original melody, harmony, and rhythm to warrant the creation of original Czech music on their basis. Secondly, he invites composers to study foreign music, to retain of it all that is good, to reject all that is superficial or foreign to the Czech spirit, and on ground of this knowledge to develop the native material.

These principles actuated also Bedřich **Smetana** (1824-1884), who consecrated his whole life to the creation of Czech national music. To the English people who always enjoyed freedom, it is difficult perhaps to understand what an important rôle art can play in the life of a nation. The fact remains that art contributed no less than political and economic progress to the final liberation of the Czechoslovaks. Music no less than literature stood in the service of the great national idea. Through music just as through poetry the Czechs expressed their spirit, and they sought in

it for inspiration and encouragement in times of distress. In Smetana, Bohemia found a genius who laid the foundations of her national music. Smetana is rightly considered one of the greatest Czech national artists not only because he succeeded in expressing the Czech national soul, as Chopin had done for Poland, but, above all, because he was a truly great artist. His work was devoted to the highest ideals in art, as well as imbued with lofty patriotism. It is this idealism which makes his work so objective and impersonal, whether it refers to Bohemia's glorious past or illustrates the beauties of her nature and the joyous mirth of the peasants, or proclaims a hope for the future. Even in his only personal work, in the quartet *From my Life*, the tragedy of his life is but delicately hinted upon, and the ideals of his life rather than its realities are emphasized. His own life appears only through the veil of his patriotism. And yet Smetana knew only too well what physical and mental suffering means.

But Smetana never ceased to be an optimist. One of the characteristics of his music is the elevating gradation of sentiment, expressed through ascending melody and through modulations from the minor into the major mode. His music is optimistic throughout: *The Bartered Bride* is one joyous dance, *Libuše* is one triumphant march. The warm sentiment of his work comes from the strong erotic feeling which is characteristic of the Slavs. The nationalism of his work is elemental, based on sentiment more than on political reasoning. Nevertheless, Smetana must be mentioned among our greatest national regenerators. He was the first truly great Czech composer and founder of that tradition which made Czech music famous throughout the world. Before Smetana the Czechs had neither any classic nor romantic music of their own. Bohemia had only just begun to breathe freely, and the efforts of her well-meaning but shortsighted romantic patriots fell often short of the true standards of art. With the exception of Křížkovský musical efforts were directed towards mere imitations of folk-music or towards the collection of folk-songs. The first Czech opera (Škroup's *Dráteník*), produced in 1826, was an obvious artistic failure. The greater was the merit of

Smetana, who had to overcome great obstacles of ignorance, incompetence, and prejudice before gaining at least partial recognition by raising the highest ideals in music. Smetana had to learn from classicism and romanticism, but foremost among his ideals he placed the modern principles of programme music and of music drama of the Weimar school (Berlioz-Liszt-Wagner), which he happily combined with the spirit of the Czech folk music into dramatic, joyous, and fine music, full of lyricism, rhythmic elasticity, rich harmony, and original melody.

Smetana's life was one great struggle with fate and adverse circumstances. His musical talent was noted already when as a six-year-old boy he gave a concert in public. In 1843 he went to Proksch's piano school, and soon became a prominent pianist. His financial difficulties, which up to then were great, were alleviated when in 1844 he accepted the post of private teacher of music in Count Thun's family. He continued to study piano, acquiring at the same time a phenomenal musical memory and theoretical knowledge. He could remember even the most difficult compositions by reading them once over. "This is not, of course, a result of mere talent," says Smetana modestly, "but of hard work, a great deal of corrections and exercises during my stay with Proksch." Here lies the explanation of the care and conscientiousness displayed in his compositions. In 1847 he left Count Thun's service and again lived in poverty. In despair he wrote to Liszt dedicating him one of his early works, *Six Morceaux Caractéristiques* for piano. Liszt at once recognized his great talent, had his composition published, and invited him to stay at his residence in Weimar. Hence arose the great friendship between the two masters. Liszt did not fail to visit his friend whenever he came to Prague, and Smetana was often his guest in Weimar, where he met other eminent musicians. Among these was Bülow, who became one of the greatest admirers of Smetana, and of whom he said that "those who thus consecrate their lives to the service of a great idea do not die." Liszt's financial help enabled him to open an institute of music in Prague, and a year later (1849) Smetana married for the first time. The institute prospered and

Smetana's reputation as pianist grew. He began also to write his first greater works: *Symphony in E Major*, *Festive Overture in D Major*, *Piano Trio in G Minor*, various piano compositions, and two men's choirs. In 1856 Smetana went to Sweden to become the director of the Harmoniska Sällskapet in Göteborg. Here he composed further orchestral works: *Richard III*, *Wallenstein's Camp*, and *Haakon Jarl*. The Swedish climate did not, however, suit his wife, who became ill, and died on her way home in 1859. Smetana returned to Sweden, but he did not cease in yearning for the return to his native country. In 1861 he married again and made a successful concert tour in Holland and Germany, and in 1862 he definitely returned to Bohemia, although the prospects for recognition there were much smaller than abroad.

The reason why he chose just this time for his return was the great political and literary activity which took place in the sixties in Bohemia after the downfall of Bach's regime in Austria. Through the foundation of *Hlahol* and the opening of the Provisional Theatre in 1862 great hopes were raised in the progress of music. The artists, organized in the Umělecká Beseda, arranged a great Shakespeare festival in 1864, which gave Smetana the opportunity to conduct *Romeo and Juliet* by Berlioz, whose visit to Prague some twenty years before was in itself a revelation. In 1866 at last were produced Smetana's first two operas, *The Brandenburgs in Bohemia* and *The Bartered Bride*. Smetana was then forty-two years of age.

He had meanwhile been active in more than one direction in trying to raise the musical level in Bohemia. From 1863 to 1865 he conducted the *Hlahol* and wrote also two choral works. When in 1864 he resigned from the Umělecká Beseda he became for a short time the musical critic of the *Národní Listy*. His articles were interesting essays on the importance of a national opera, of regular orchestral concerts, and of musical life generally. From artists he asked serious study, and reminded them of the words of Schumann that "there is no end to learning." He declared himself "an ardent promoter of the great truth of the programme of the Weimar school" in a letter written to Liszt in 1858.

He held fast to the words of Liszt that "the chief aim of an artist is at all times to persevere in one's own inner convictions of what is good and best, in its consequent cultivation and realization." Believing in this, he could not but criticize mercilessly the existing conditions in the Provisional Theatre, where under Mayr's direction opera was on the programme but five times in a month. With the exception of the *Huguenots* and of Gluck's *Orpheus* and *Armida*, the repertoire consisted exclusively of second-rate old-fashioned Italian operas in which the aria stood for everything. Smetana advocated the production of Mozart, Beethoven, Glinka, Moniuszko, and others, and if possible also of Wagner. With *Tannhäuser* returning from Rome he called: "I came to loath that sweet singing." These attacks naturally created bitter enemies for him of all the supporters of Mayr's regime, which grew even more violent when in 1866 the first Czech management took over the Provisional Theatre and Smetana became, thanks to the success of his *Bartered Bride*, the conductor of the opera. This post he held until in 1874 deafness forced him to resign.

Smetana's first opera, *The Brandenburgs*, was a great revelation, and gained him at once many partisans, especially among the general public. Czech opera hitherto was composed by second-rate talents (Škroup, Skuherský, Kittl, Bradský), and remained without effect on the development of music. *The Brandenburgs*, on the other hand, shows Smetana as a finished artist and original personality. Although the principles of a music drama were not yet fully developed in this work, the opera was nevertheless considered revolutionary. The harmony seemed too modern, and in general similar arguments were raised against it, and especially against *Dalibor*, as against the works of Wagner in Germany. Added to these was the short-sighted nationalistic argument that Smetana was not Czech enough, because he did not imitate the folk-songs like his contemporaries. This bigot patriotism failed to appreciate in Smetana the great Czech national composer which he was, just as it failed to see in Neruda the true founder of modern Czech poetry.

On the other hand, *The Bartered Bride* was greeted with universal approval, although Smetana admitted that he composed it only to appease his critics and to prove that he could also compose in a light national style. But this circumstance in no way impeached the value of this work. In artistic conception there is, indeed, no difference between his comic and his tragic operas. The style of *The Bartered Bride* never descends to vulgarity, and chooses always only what is noble and graceful in the spirit of popular music. Smetana, no doubt, had in mind the example of Mozart's *Figaro*. Through *The Bartered Bride* Smetana also proved the fallacy of the popular opinion that national music must imitate the rhythm and melody of the folk-song. Not only was this to him insufficient for the creation of an opera, but it seemed to him fundamentally mistaken. Smetana carefully avoided imitating folk-music, and preferred, though rarely, to quote a dance or song in full ("Furiant" in *The Bartered Bride*, lullaby in *Hubička*). The spirit of his music, however, reflects the spirit of the Czech folk-melody and dance, projected through the ennobling mind of the composer, in the same way as Chopin's music reflects the spirit of the Poles.

The chief attacks of the musical critics were directed against him after the production of *Dalibor* in 1868. This opera was declared to be a step-back from Smetana's former works, although in reality it was but a further development of the principles (such as the use of characteristic motives) which Smetana had in mind when he composed *The Brandenburgs*. These principles were: (1) The equal value of the chief artistic factors in opera: orchestra ceases to be a mere accompaniment to the aria-singing singers; harmony must exist between the meaning of the words and music, the poetic value of the libretto should not be inferior to the value of the music, etc. (2) The efficacy of the opera is raised by the use of characteristic motives, whether forthcoming in the orchestra or on the stage. (3) The music sung ought to be declamatory; it ought to conform to the natural accent of the spoken word. In all these principles excepting the last, to which Smetana conformed more strictly only in his later works, Smetana

was decidedly an admirer of Wagner. On the other hand, he cannot be called a Wagnerian, because the only operas of Wagner which were then known were *The Flying Dutchman*, *Tannhäuser*, and *Lohengrin*. Smetana was always conscious that Wagner's style could never be completely adapted to the spirit of Czech music, and he tried always to be thoroughly Czech and original. Very rarely do we find reminiscences of Wagner's melodies, or harmonic innovations; and yet his conservative critics attacked him bitterly for imitating Wagner, for trying to introduce "German" music into Bohemia. His chief enemy was Pivoda, director of a singing school, but his attacks had also a strong personal flavour in them. Pivoda was angry because Smetana would not at the end of each season change the whole ensemble in order to engage his pupils. On the other hand, Smetana found staunch supporters in Neruda, in L. Procházka, and, later, especially in Professor Otakar Hostinský, who wrote strong articles in his defence.

Hostinský also drew the attention of Smetana to the importance of the spoken language for the creation of sound national music, and encouraged him generally in a more consequent pursuance of the Wagnerian reform. "The national character of music is founded foremost on the spoken word," says Hostinský. "Every language has its own accent, its own melodic and rhythmic peculiarities, apparent in poetry as well as in prose. From its regulation, emphasis, and idealization results the song as original music." The fact that in his first operas Smetana overlooked this principle is explained by the small regard which is paid in Czech folk-songs to the natural accent of the word. Even in poetry the first Czech poets often wrote in hexameter without regard to the natural accent of the language. This probably also contributed to Smetana's declamatory mistakes in his first two operas. Another reason was perhaps the concessions which Smetana made in his works to the prevalent prejudices and ideas about opera.

As regards declamatory style *Hubička* (*The Kiss*) was a great improvement on *The Bartered Bride*, while *Libuše* and *Tajemství* (*The Secret*) were perfect in this

respect. *Dalibor* was not, in fact, the beginning of Smetana's decadence, but of his successful growth. If Smetana did not reach completely the ideal of Wagnerian music drama it was due to various reasons: to the fact that he began to write operas too late in his life and died too soon, to the concessions he made to his critics, and, above all, to the lack of a good libretto. The failure to create a purely Wagnerian drama was, however, more than amply compensated by the masterly way in which Smetana succeeded in implanting in his works the Czech national spirit. Modern opinion to-day is altogether doubtful whether this failure was necessarily to the detriment of his work.

The highest point reached by Smetana in music drama was *Libuše*, in comic opera *Tajemství*. Although finished already in 1872, *Libuše* was not produced till 1881, when Smetana was no more able to hear it. It deals with the mythologic story of the first Czech princess who ruled Bohemia and founded Prague. Smetana originally intended it to be played only on special occasions, but its success on the occasion of the opening of the National Theatre was so overwhelming that it became an integral part of the regular repertoire, together with *The Bartered Bride* and *Hubička*. Besides the symphonic cycle *Má Vlast (My Country)* it is the most powerful expression of Smetana's effort at a majestic symbol of the grandeur of Bohemian history in music. "Music is only a medium of expression, the aim itself is drama," said Wagner, and indeed the whole opera *Libuše* is one music drama without arias or "independent numbers." The declamatory style, combining the melody with the natural accent of the word, characteristic motives, a rich polyphony in the orchestra, and a grand pathetic style culminate in *Libuše's* prophecy of a better future for Bohemia.

The failure of *Dalibor* induced Smetana to return to comic opera. In 1874 was produced *The Two Widows*, to the words of Maleville's comedy. Unlike *The Bartered Bride*, the story takes place in a drawing-room with only occasional peasant scenes, but the light and noble style is the same. Even this opera did not please Smetana's critics, however, who, led by Pivoda, assailed him more

bitterly than ever at a time when he was already losing his sense of hearing. He lost it completely in the same year, retired from the theatre, and went to his country home in Jakbenice.

For some time he remained silent, but when he found that all hope for recovery was in vain his strong spirit rose with renewed vigour, unconquered by this blow of fate, to create some of its best products. Smetana, in fact, lost none of his musical memory and creative power until the very end of his life. Stimulated by the unrelenting attacks of his adversaries and by the rise of a rival genius in the person of Antonín Dvořák, feeling the Damocles sword of his approaching death, Smetana never despaired or gave way to depression. With his high artistic and national ideals in mind, he created the great symphonic cycle *Má Vlast*, the operas *Hučička* and *Tajemství*, the piano cycle of *Czech Dances*, and the quartet *From My Life*, all of which belong to his best works.

In *Hučička (The Kiss)*, finished in 1876, he created a comic opera in many ways superior to *The Bartered Bride*, especially as regards lyrical melody and harmony between music and words, while *Tajemství (The Secret)*, finished in 1878, is considered his best comic opera of all. Here again he paid special regard to characteristic motives, and the orchestral part is rich in colour and polyphony. Between 1874 and 1879 Smetana wrote *Má Vlast (My Country)*, consisting of six symphonic poems, of which *Vltava*, *Vyšehrad*, and *Tábor* are the best known abroad. The whole work is one great glorification of Bohemia's past, of her natural beauty, and of her future. In this cycle Smetana, while adopting the principles of the Liszt Symphonic Poem, has achieved through his own peculiar invention a work of great originality.

Another work unique in musical literature is his quartet *From My Life* (1876), describing Smetana's youth, his artistic and national ideals, his love for his wife, and finally the tragedy of his deafness. The quartet ends characteristically in a philosophic conclusion, in a quiet, peaceful harmony expressing his resignation in fate and his faith in God.

The last works of Smetana include the opera *Čertova Stěna* (*The Devil's Wall*), the second quartet, in D minor, and the beginning of an opera called *Viola*. *The Devil's Wall*, finished in 1882, did not prove a success. The libretto itself was poor, the production careless; and the music bore the first traces of Smetana's failing powers. Although the harmony is still excellent, its colours appear faded and its tones deprived of their usual sonority. Smetana probably was no more sure of the effect of the sounds. The same applies also to the quartet in D minor, while mere sketches remain of the contemplated opera *Viola*, which he wanted to compose on a libretto adapted from Shakespeare. Unfortunately it remained, like the orchestral suite *Carneval*, unfinished. Even his last days brought him many bitter moments. When *The Devil's Wall* was performed in his honour and benefit, the house was almost empty. "I see that I am getting too old," he said in tears, when the first act was over, "that I ought not to write any more, that nothing more is wanted from me." His illness developed into insanity in 1884, from which fortunately death soon released him. Liszt was sorely stricken with the news and wrote: "He was a true genius."

In all his work Smetana followed a definite programme and ideal. He laid the foundations of the great Czech operatic tradition, and thus contributed to the building up of Czech culture, without which Czechoslovak independence could not have been accomplished. His music kept the flame of Czech patriotism burning, and his general recognition in Bohemia of to-day is indisputable.

Smetana remained for a long time unknown in other countries. The chief reason lay in the prejudice of the Germans against the national character of his work. It was a strange irony of fate that at home Smetana should have been attacked for being under German influence, while in Germany he was boycotted for his Czech nationalism. Up to 1892 the best known of his works abroad were *Vltava*, *From My Life*, and the overture to *The Bartered Bride*. The failure of *The Bartered Bride* itself, when it did penetrate outside the frontiers of Bohemia, was often due to careless staging and production. In 1871 it was given in

Petrograd, but it failed to make a favourable impression on the Russian critics, to whom it seemed too "Western." It gained a great success, however, in 1874, in Zagreb. A notable success was scored by *The Two Widows* in Hamburg in 1881, and Smetana was proclaimed "a second Beethoven." A definite change in the attitude of the Germans towards Smetana did not, however, take place till 1892, when the Czech National Theatre company came to Vienna to participate in the International Exhibition of Theatre and Music. *The Bartered Bride* and *Dalibor* met with great success on that occasion. Gustav Mahler introduced soon after *The Bartered Bride* in the Court Opera (1897), and later also *The Kiss* and *The Secret* were translated and produced in German theatres. Smetana's operas have since then been often played on various stages in Poland, Italy, Yugoslavia, Germany, and Austria. *The Bartered Bride* was played in Drury Lane in 1903, by the Carl Rosa company in 1905, and in Covent Garden in 1907. In the New York Metropolitan Opera it was produced with great success in 1909. A fervent promoter of Smetana in America and in Berlin was Emmy Destinnová (*Dalibor* was produced at her instigation in Berlin in 1909), while the chief merit for the promotion of the quartet *From My Life* falls undoubtedly to its splendid interpreter, the Czech (Bohemian) Quartet, who also are the best exponents of Dvořák.

Antonín Dvořák, the Founder of Czech Symphony.

Much better known abroad than Smetana was always Antonín **Dvořák** (1841-1904). It cannot very well be said that Dvořák continued where Smetana had stopped. Dvořák was in many ways an entirely different genius from Smetana. If Smetana's ideal was foremost the creation of new national music and a national opera, and if he had a definite programme which he followed and fought for, the same does not apply to Dvořák; who was above all a symphonic writer, a master in chamber music, and a writer of absolute music. Dvořák had the soul of a naïve, trustfully pious child, and had no ambition to become a revolutionary

or a pioneer of a new creed in music. Dvořák at the bottom of his heart was a classic, a believer in absolute music, but at the same time he had an open mind to any modern tendencies in music, and learnt readily and equally from the old masters and from Schubert, Wagner, Smetana, and Brahms. This lack of a definite programme has earned him many criticisms from musical æsthetes. Just as Vrchlický, with whom Dvořák had in common a quick rise to fame and a talent for facile and prolific production, Dvořák has been charged with eclecticism, psychic distraction, lack of dramatic sense, and the lack of a serious style. Most of these charges are, of course, without foundation. The various outward influences and reminiscences from other composers which may be found in Dvořák, would perhaps be unpardonable in a composer who did not possess the striking personality and musical genius of Dvořák. But his extremely strong, original, and fresh temperament impressed all his works with a peculiar character of their own which distinguishes them from any other works. In regard to this point Professor Hostinský considers Dvořák even superior to Brahms. In music, as in other arts, we find two kinds of genii. Some, the pioneers of progress, find new forms and new means for expressing their artistic aspirations on grounds of previous tradition. Their innovations are generally accepted, and their spirit lives in their works as well as in the works of their successors, even if sometimes their names fall into oblivion later. Other composers may not enrich existing forms, yet their work has the imprint of their strong talent and personality, and is so original that it assures them immortality. Dvořák's genius belongs to the latter category.

Dvořák has been also charged with using indiscriminately folk-music to lend an exotic colour to his compositions. Folk-songs and dances are, indeed, a dangerous ground for a composer, because the anonymous author's originality, style, taste, and self-criticism are not always on the level of true art and the true artistic value must always be sought in them with care. Smetana, for instance, was most careful in discriminating what was characteristic, original, and beautiful in folk-dances, which saved him from any

lapses into vulgarity or from mechanical imitation. He toned down the rhythm and emphasized and beautified the melody. Like Chopin, Smetana tried to embody the soul of his people in his compositions, and placed the standards of pure art above all. If he used folk-tunes he idealized them first, and often used them as a means to dramatic pathos, just as Chopin used Polish tunes as melancholy reminiscences of Poland's better past. Superficially speaking, Dvořák was not so scrupulous in his treatment of folk-melodies. He often accepted them as they were, and, fascinated by their rhythm, emphasized it rather than toned it down, and his works must, therefore, be played with delicacy and accuracy for rhythmic and dynamic details. This indulgence in rhythmical effects is one of the chief charms of his work, though it would be fatal if done by anybody but Dvořák. In any case, Dvořák's method was not actuated by any nationalistic feelings or by ethnographic considerations. Like Verdi, Bizet, and Čajkovský (Tchaikowsky), he had an artistic *raison d'être* for it. From his youth he lived among simple peasants, often playing in their bands, so that the spirit of a popular composer lived in him and became a part of his personality in much the same way as later with Janáček. It is true that Dvořák used later also other Slav folk-songs, and even negro melodies, in order to lend colour to his works. But what his critics forget is that his music retained always a character of its own, whatever melodies it employed, and that that character was essentially Czech, even though Dvořák himself may have been unconscious of it. Dvořák's humble origin and his reliance on God, on instinct and intuition rather than on intellect, assured his work that particular impression of sound, robust strength, freshness, directness, delicacy, and sincerity which is so highly valued by all lovers of music. In his music there is something extremely human, joyous, spontaneous, and elemental which reflects the soul of his people. Added to this general character of his music, it has the following characteristics: beautiful fluent melody, pronounced rhythm, and masterly orchestration, through which Dvořák likes to indulge in exotic and sensually warm colour effects. Dvořák lacked, however, the sense of the

dramatic. His music expresses the joy of dancing or the lyric atmosphere in wonderfully beautiful colours, but it rarely interprets sorrow or tragedy. It knows of contrasts but not of conflicts. This is apparent in his symphonies, and even more in his operas. In vocal music Dvořák seldom adapts music to the words, for he is a partisan of absolute music who does not think vocally but instrumentally. Nevertheless, his songs have a great charm, and the above-mentioned facts will only help us to understand and appreciate better his symphonies, symphonic poems, ballads, and operas, which must be judged on their purely musical merits. In chamber music such reservations are happily not necessary. In all these works (nine string quartets, two piano quartets, one sextet, one piano quintet, four piano trios, etc.) Dvořák has proved himself to be a perfect master. Nor can anything faulty be found with his scoring. In this respect Dvořák was a genius second to none. He was never in doubt what theme or melody suits an orchestra best and what is suitable for a string quartet. His instrumentation is perfect. It is also important to bear in mind that, like Verdi, Dvořák tried throughout his life to improve his work, so that his symphonies, quartets, and operas show a constant progress and improvement.

Dvořák's youth left many traces on his character. Born in Nelahozeves, near Prague, on September 9, 1841, as one of eight children of the local butcher, he showed early his talent for music. His first teachers were those village schoolmasters who for centuries kept up the reputation of the Czechs as a musical race. Thus we learn that already as a little boy Dvořák learnt the violin from a Mr. Spitz, while later in Zlonice his teacher became Liehmann. In 1854 Dvořák learnt organ playing and counterpoint from Hanck in Česká Kamenice. At the age of fourteen Dvořák came back home in order to assist his father whose business had meanwhile prospered badly. Even as a butcher's shop assistant Dvořák found time, however, to cultivate music and played the organ in the church, violin or viola in village bands and even sang occasionally. In 1857 his father's friends persuaded him to send young Anthony to Prague, where he attended the school of organists under the reac-

tionary J. Krejčí, and imbibed eagerly all that the musical life in Prague could offer him. The composer Karel Bendl¹ became his bosom friend. The influence of the village fiddlers and the lack of previous systematic tuition weighed heavily on Dvořák, and it took him some time before he succeeded in counteracting and removing this handicap by self-tuition and study.

Taken as a whole, the work of Dvořák has throughout the same original character. Nevertheless, outwardly we may distinguish several periods in his creation. At first, in the sixties, he was fascinated by Wagner and almost at the same time also by Smetana. The second, so-called "Slav" period lasted till about 1880. Then Dvořák turned back to the classics and to the Meyerbeer "grand opera," and looked to Brahms as his teacher. Into this period fall also his visits to England and his oratorios, while his stay in America marks the beginning of the last period, during which Dvořák returned once more to the then generally recognized programme music of Liszt and Wagner. It may be asked with justification how a serious composer like Dvořák could change his views so many times. The answer lies in the fact that Dvořák really never took serious interest in such æsthetic theories as were represented by Wagnerism. His genius did not draw inspiration from analytical intellectualism but rather from intuition, and consequently was foreign to programme music. If he was impressed sometimes by some aspects of these theories he did not use them consequently, and the organic development of his work was not affected thereby. Dvořák admired Wagner sincerely, for he saw in him a great composer, but his influence on Dvořák was purely musical, apparent sometimes in Dvořák's harmony, polyphony, and rich orchestration. In opera Dvořák never fully understood Wagner's ideas, and all Dvořák's "Wagnerism" consisted in an inconsequent use of characteristic motives and in the occasional use of declamatory style. Dvořák respected the natural accent of the word, but not the importance of the word in relation to music. Nevertheless, there is

¹ K. Bendl (1838-1897), a prolific writer of songs, choirs, and operas, was influenced chiefly by Meyerbeer and Mendelssohn.

undoubtedly a constant progress in his operas, and Dvořák succeeded in creating many interesting types, while musically his operas have the same high standard as all his other works.

When Dvořák left the school he joined Komzák's orchestra, which from 1862 till 1873 played in the Provisional Theatre. His salary was about 30s. a month. He still had to rely chiefly on self-education, for at the school he could not learn much from Krejčí, a sworn enemy of Berlioz, Wagner, and Liszt. But the productions of the Society Cecilia, conducted by Apt, a promoter of Schumann and Wagner, taught him a great deal, and he gained more knowledge from the use of Bendl's extensive library. Smetana and his *Bartered Bride* impressed him enormously. In 1873 he married and became organist at the St. Adalbert Church in Prague. His salary there was only 20s. a month, but his new occupation left him more spare time for composition. The year 1875 proved of great moment for his future career. Having submitted his E flat major symphony to the Austrian State Commission, on which sat also Hanslick and Brahms, Dvořák obtained a State prize of 400 fl. a year, which was increased during the following years to 600 fl. This not only enabled him to devote all his time to composition, but gained him also the friendship of Brahms, who recommended him to the publisher Simrock and thus assured him his later fame.

Dvořák's earliest works were three unnumbered symphonies: in B flat major (1865), E flat major (1872), and in D minor (1874). The last two, strongly Wagnerian, were published after his death. His first published symphony was written in D major (op. 60) in 1881. The so-called third symphony in F major (op. 76) is a much earlier work than the D major symphony, having been composed in 1875, and shows still a strong influence of Beethoven and Wagner. Dvořák did not as yet aspire to write Slav music, but this symphony bears already the joyous, happy character of all his subsequent works. Between 1862 and 1873 Dvořák wrote also four quartets (ops. 2, 4, 9, and 10). His first opera, *The King and the Coalman*, was a bold venture which proved a failure. Dvořák revised it himself in 1874.

During the so-called " Slav " period of Dvořák's creation the great composer developed a sincere admiration for Smetana and Schubert. The two comic operas which he composed in 1874 (*Pigheaded Youth*) and in 1878 (*Peasant, the Rascal*) had obviously *The Bartered Bride* for their example, yet the music has the imprint of Dvořák's strong personality. The second opera contains an interesting contrast of the peasants and the gentry, which later is found also in *The Jacobin* and *Kitty and the Devil*. In 1876 Dvořák wrote also a tragic opera called *Wanda* on a Polish story which formed a pendant to *Libuše*.

Dvořák wanted to become the founder of " Slav " music in the same way as Smetana became the founder of Czech music. This Utopia was no doubt the result of romantic pan-Slavism which maintained the unity of all Slavs, ignoring the great differences existing between the various Slav nations. The fallacy of seeking to create " Slav " music was recognized by Dvořák himself later on. Dvořák also found out only later what was always clear to Smetana, that folk-songs were not enough for composing national music, that the national character of music lies far deeper than in the reproduction of the spirit of the language and of folk-songs, and that " a Czech alone can write Czech music." But in 1894 his ideas were still not clear on the subject, for he wrote from America :—

" National music is not created out of nothing. It has to be discovered and clad in beautiful forms, just as popular myths and legends are brought to light and crystallized into immortal verses by great poets. All that is required is a good ear, a good memory, and a faculty for moulding fragments of past generations into a harmonic whole. A few days ago I read that Brahms, according to his own words, took folk-tunes as motives for his new collection of songs and arranged them for piano. Liszt in his rhapsodies did the same, and Schumann in his *Two Grenadiers* used the *Marseillaise*. The Irishman Balfe used a Hussite choir in his *Bohemian Girl*, although nobody knows where he got it from. Thus sooner or later popular music attracts the attention of and finds its way into the works of great composers. . . . I know that the question whether inspiration

drawn from some stray melody or folk-song is sufficient to lend higher musical works a national character has not yet been solved. Neither is it certain whether national music as such deserves priority. I for myself believe firmly that that music which is the most characteristic of a nation deserves the greatest recognition."

These thoughts occupied Dvořák's mind from the very beginning, but we must seek the national Czech character of his music deeper than on the folkloristic surface which he used to lend his compositions an exotic colour. Some of his best songs, for instance, include Greek songs (op. 50) from 1883, Serbian songs (op. 6, 1879), and his most popular work, the *Gipsy Melodies* (op. 55, 1880). His early songs on the words of Hálek have a warm, subjective character. The most consciously "national" songs have been composed later: *Songs in the National Style* (1886) and *The Moravian Duets*. Dvořák wrote also choral music on Lithuanian melodies and on Czech folk-songs, but the best, and for his fame the most important, remain *The Moravian Duets*. These were published in Prague already in 1877 at the expense of Jan Neff, but they owe their popularity abroad to Brahms, who submitted them in December 1877 to Simrock with a warm recommendation: "If you play them they will give you, as they gave me, a real joy, and as a publisher you ought to be pleased with their piquancy." Simrock, indeed, did not regret accepting the proposal, for within a few months he sold out two editions of the *Duets*. At the same time Simrock invited Dvořák to write Czech dances in the style of the *Hungarian Dances* by Brahms. This offer suited Dvořák well, for it coincided with his own intentions. Thus originated the first series of his famous *Slav Dances*, written first as piano duets and then orchestrated by Dvořák himself. In 1879 his *Slav Dances* were known all over Europe, while in 1880 his *Slav Rhapsodies* (op. 45) spread his fame further both in Europe and America. The first performance of the *Slav Dances* in England took place at Crystal Palace on February 15, 1879.

In Prague his first great success was scored by the patriotic cantata "Hymnus" in 1874, and by the serenade for strings in E major in 1876. Among other orchestral works

of the early period must be mentioned "The Czech Suite" (op. 39) and two serenades written in 1878, one for strings in E major and one for wood, horns, and double bass in D minor (op. 44). His piano compositions were mostly Phantasies on Czech folk-dances. The best of them are Furiant (ops. 12 and 42), Valse (op. 54) and Mazurkas (op. 56). Dvořák's first quartet in A minor (op. 16) has not yet Dvořák's characteristic rhythm. In 1876 Dvořák wrote two more quartets, in E major and in D minor. His fourth quartet in E flat major (op. 51) has a Dumka, characteristic of Dvořák's works with peculiar changes of rhythm and effective contrasts of gay and melancholy moods, and a beautiful Romance. Other chamber music of this period includes a quintet with double bass, two piano trios, Bagatelles for piano, two violins and 'cello, and a string sextet in A major (op. 48) which contains both a Dumka and a Furiant, a Czech folk-dance characteristic by its changing $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{2}{4}$ rhythm.

During the third period Dvořák's music assumes, under the influence of the classics and of Brahms, a more serene, manly character. In opera Dvořák turned to the form of the old grand opera with arias and choirs. This change was perhaps also due to the influence of the conservative critic Hanslick and of Brahms, who then condemned Wagner's reform, but it was not such a radical change from Dvořák's former attitude as might appear, because Dvořák never really was a Wagnerian in the strict sense of the word. In 1882 Dvořák wrote a tragic opera, *Dimitrij*, on a story from Russian history at the time of Boris Godunov. This opera was revised by himself ten years later, certain arias being substituted by declamatory style. His second opera from this period was *The Jacobine*, a fine comic opera, resembling his previous operas of this kind. In it we find again the contrast of two worlds, that of the peasants and that of the gentry.

In 1885 Dvořák wrote his greatest symphony in D minor (op. 70), known as the second symphony. It is written in good classical form, has throughout a sombre, subdued character with good dynamic effects, and without any "Slav" exotisms. It is a work of great originality and

inspiration. A complete harmony exists between all the four movements, which have a fine psychic content and end in a grand culmination.

The influence of the classics is also clear, at least formally, in the chamber music composed during this period, which includes a violin sonata in F major, quartet in C major (op. 61), piano trio in F minor, piano quartet in E flat major, and the celebrated piano quintet in A major (op. 81), with a *Dumka* and a *Furiant*. A sympathetic work of a noble character is also his piano concerto in G minor (op. 33), although it is not gratefully written for the solo instrument, and the more popular violin concerto in A minor (op. 53), written for Joachim. To the Slav dances and rhapsodies Dvořák now added *Legends* (op. 59, 1880), written again first for the piano and orchestrated later. They have the serious, epic character of ballads rather than the spirit of simple legends. In 1882 and 1883 Dvořák wrote also two overtures, which formed preludes to his later symphonic poems. The first, an overture to a popular play, "*Josef Kajetán Tyl*," is a phantasy on the Czech national anthem, the second ("*Husitská*") is founded on the Hussite hymn and the hymn to St. Venceslas. It is wonderfully orchestrated, and became popular even outside Bohemia. To the same category belong also his three dramatic overtures written in 1892: "*In Nature*," "*Carneval*" (Life) and "*Othello*" (Love). His piano compositions include the "*Poetic Impressions*" (1883), and the famous *Eight Humoresques* (op. 101, 1894), written on his return from America.

The most important compositions written at this period are, however, his oratorios, which are closely bound up with his visits to England. His first and greatest oratorio, "*Stabat Mater*," was written spontaneously, and, as all his works, it has a manly, not a sentimental character, with a tendency towards Catholic pompousness and sensationalism, but it reflects faithfully Dvořák's sincerely loyal piety, the piety of a soul recognizing unreservedly God as the Supreme Power. "*Stabat Mater*" was produced for the first time in England in March 1883, but it scored its greatest success only a year later, when Dvořák came personally to England to conduct it in Albert Hall. The London public

accorded him a reception in such great numbers and with such an enthusiasm as are but seldom witnessed. His English publisher, Littleton, offered him £2,000 for a new oratorio, which he wanted Dvořák to write for the Leeds festival. Dvořák since then visited England several times : in September 1884 he conducted "Stabat Mater" in the Worcester Cathedral, in 1885 "Hymnus" and his piano concerto in London, in August 1885 "The Spectre's Bride" at the Birmingham festival, in October 1886 his oratorio "St. Ludmila" at the Leeds festival, etc. In 1891 Dvořák, already an honorary member of various societies and Academies in England, Holland, Serbia, and Austria, Knight of the Iron Crown, and Honorary Doctor of the Prague University, became also Honorary Doctor of Cambridge University. In Germany Dvořák's fame was spread chiefly by Bülow and Hans Richter.

Of all Dvořák's oratorios the "Stabat Mater" is probably the best. "The Spectre's Bride" was written in a hurry, and has many of the weak points of Dvořák's dramatic music. It does not always faithfully reflect the spirit of Erben's ballad, and there is very little of the tragic or ghostly about its music. The solo numbers by themselves are beautiful, however, and form still favourite items at orchestral concerts, while the purely orchestral and choral parts include many fine impressionistic pictures. "St. Ludmila" is written after the example of Liszt's "St. Elisabeth," on words by Vrchlický. This oratorio lacks also in dramatic spirit, the best being the last part, which succeeds in culminating in a powerful, pathetic climax of rich vocal polyphony. To the same category as these oratorios belong also Dvořák's ecclesiastical compositions : the Mass in D major (op. 86), the beautiful Requiem (op. 89), proclaimed a *chef d'œuvre* in England, a joyous thanksgiving "Psalm" (op. 79), and "Te Deum" (op. 103) of grand hymnical effect.

In 1886 Dvořák returned for a short time to his "Slav" tradition. At the request of Simrock he wrote the second series of his *Slav Dances*, in which he made use of not only Czech melodies, as in his first series, but also of Slovak, Polish, Serbian, and Russian tunes. With these melodies

still in mind he wrote also his Fourth Symphony in G major (op. 88), the boldest of all his symphonies in respect of freedom of form. To these Slav reminiscences we must also ascribe his beautiful Dumky Trio (op. 90), consisting of six parts, and built on the contrast of gay and mournful folk-tunes.

In 1891 Dvořák was invited to go to America to become the Director of the New York Conservatory of Music for two years for a salary of \$15,000 a year with four months of leave annually. This offer was gladly accepted, and Dvořák landed in New York in September 1892. His ambition was to become the founder of American music, based on native negro melodies, which he found "ardent, fine, passionate, melancholy, noble, and bold." His first step was to have negroes admitted to the Conservatory, and one of the attractions of his concerts was the participation of negro soloists and choirs. Dvořák began to put his theories into practice by arranging "The Old Folks at Home" and Foster's "Plantation Songs" for orchestra and choir, and by composing a cantata in four parts on the American national anthem ("The American Flag"). Negro melodies have lent an exotic colour also to his New World Symphony in E minor (No. 5), which is too well known in England to need description, his American quartet in F major, and partly also to his string quintet for two violas, two violins, and 'cello, which contains wonderfully written passages for the viola's soft, sensual timbre.

The American period coincides with the beginning of Dvořák's last period, characterized by a meditative, subjective depth of reflection, by a growing fervour of sentiment, piety, and sincerity. Formally Dvořák once more turned from absolute music to the now generally recognized programme music and Wagnerian conception of opera. A sombre, religious character is manifest both in his "Four Songs" (op. 88), and in his "Biblical Songs" (op. 99). The violoncello seems to have become the favourite instrument of old Dvořák. He wrote many beautiful melodies for the 'cello in his Dumky and in the American quartet, and in 1892 he composed the difficult violoncello concerto (op. 104), containing also some American reminiscences.

A smaller composition is the Rondo for 'cello and piano (op. 94).

Nothing could prove to the world and to Dvořák himself the fallacy of creating national music by means of folk-melodies more than Dvořák's attempt at creating "American" music through the use of negro tunes. Despite all the negro motives, Dvořák's strong personality lends his music a specific character which is Czech character. His quartets in G major (op. 105) and in A flat major (op. 106), written in 1895, mark the end of his American period, the end of nationalistic exotism.

The ambition of the last period of Dvořák's life was to idealize and perpetuate in music Czech mythological beings. With this object in view he wrote symphonic poems on Erben's ballads, "The Waterman," "The Midday Ghost," "The Golden Spinning Wheel," and "The Dove," as well as two operas, "Kitty and the Devil" and "Rusalka" ("The Water-Nymph"). The symphonic poems do not solve any human, psychological problems, but are limited to the musical characterization of mythological beings. The same applies to the two operas, which are both fairy tales. The lyric atmosphere of "Rusalka" especially suited Dvořák's temperament, so that this opera is justly considered his most beautiful and best opera of all. Dvořák's last opera, "Armida," on Vrchlický's adaptation of Tasso's "Liberated Jerusalem," proved a failure both on account of its involved libretto and on account of the Oriental setting, foreign to Dvořák's genius.

Dvořák died on May 1, 1904, at the age of sixty-three. His friend Knittl said well of him, when he spoke on his grave: "His heart knew neither vanity nor ambition. As in his music, so in his life, he could reconcile the greatest dissonances with pleasing consonances. The counterpoint of his life, in which many contrasting themes met and parted again, resolved finally in a perfect harmony." Dvořák was, indeed, a great genius who could speak directly to the heart of his people, whom he understood so well. He was a straightforward, kind-hearted, and honest character to the core. If Smetana created Czech national opera, Dvořák educated the Czechs to a love of symphonic and chamber

music, and among the many pupils which he brought up are also two of the greatest Czech contemporary composers, Novák and Suk. Two of his pupils, Nedbal and Suk, were also, with Hoffmann and Wihan, members of the Bohemian (Czech) quartet when it was founded in 1892, which still remains one of the finest string quartets in the world.

Zdeněk Fibich: A Real Romantic and Wagnerian.

Almost simultaneously with Dvořák, Bohemia produced yet another great composer of a totally different order in Zdeněk **Fibich** (1850-1900), who was hailed as a worthy continuer of Smetana in opera, and incidentally proclaimed by Dvořák's opponents as the genius who alone could point out the right path to further progress.

There is no doubt that Fibich was a talented, hardworking, and intelligent composer. He is said to have written a novel at the age of ten and he conducted his first symphony at the age of fourteen. His comparatively wealthy parents could afford to give him the best education and musical training in Prague, Leipzig, and Mannheim. His operas are, from a formal point of view, more consequently Wagnerian than Smetana's. They have a perfect declamatory style, and all the other attributes of Wagner's reform. Unlike Dvořák, Fibich relies chiefly on intellectual reflection, and is a typical representative of an artist who pursues art for the sake of art alone. In universal, encyclopædic erudition Fibich resembles Zeyer and Vrchlický, with whose cosmopolitanism he had great sympathies. Nothing can ever be said against his works as regards form or style. Fibich's work, however, often fails, despite its high qualities, in many points essential to art, for it lacks in inspiration, originality and personality, and cannot therefore, in our opinion, be valued equally with the work of Dvořák and Smetana.

In an effort to bring the Wagnerian music drama to perfection, Fibich went too far by becoming a slavish imitator of Wagner. Smetana was careful in adopting Wagner's principles, and tried to illustrate in music the softer, more lyric, gay, and humorous character of the Slav Czechs. For obtaining a dramatic effect he often used a

typically Czech fluent and rhythmical melody. Fibich's melody not only lacks in any attributes of Czech national music, unless we mistake his soft sentimentality for Slav sensitiveness, but it lacks also in originality. Its spirit, devoid of humour, aristocratic, cold, and dry, is entirely foreign to the average Czech character. Fibich himself admitted at the end of his life the failure of his "Bride of Messina," declared by Professor Nejedlý to be "a classical Czech music drama, the acme of musical progress of the Smetana period, the most original work of Fibich and therefore of Czech music." Fibich himself, however, says: "When I finished composing it I felt dissatisfied, sad, and disgusted. I felt that I am not on the right path, and what's more, I felt that I am not on my own path. . . . 'The Bride of Messina' is quite strange to me; it seems as though I had never written it. I must admit that this cold, subordinate work bores me."

In symphonic and chamber music works Fibich was under the influence of Schumann and German romanticism, while in opera Wagner fascinated him to the extent of depriving him of all individuality. Only later can we perceive that Fibich succeeds in emancipating himself from these foreign influences. Despite all this, his operas are not entirely negligible as works of art, and exerted considerable influence on the younger generation. His operas have, as a rule, very good librettos, the music is tragically dramatic and often even passionate. The best of his operas are: "The Bride of Messina," on words adapted from Schiller's drama (1883); "The Tempest," on Shakespeare's drama adapted by Vrchlický (1893); "Heda" (1895), after Byron's "Don Juan"; "Šárka," on a story from Czech mythology about the women's revolt against men, showing Smetana's influence; and "The Fall of Arcoon" (1898), on the victory of Christianity over paganism in Northern Europe. Fibich's great technical accomplishment, and his power of musical illustration of psychological and dramatic conflicts, found their best expression in his orchestral melodramas (recited poems, accompanied by orchestra), the best of them being on Erben's ballads "The Water-Sprite" and "Christmas Eve." On the same principle is composed also the scenic

melodrama "Hippodamia," a trilogy by Vrchlický, in which the dramatic story and the spoken word are accompanied throughout by opportune music. In this work Fibich brought to perfection the principle which occupied the mind of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and George Benda. And by the introduction into it of polyphony and the use of characteristic motives he has won himself an important place in the history of modern music.

Contemporary Czech Symphony: Novák and Suk.

Music in Bohemia has made great progress since the days of Smetana, Dvořák, and Fibich. In opera Kovařovic, Ostrčil, Foerster, Novák, Karel, and, above all, Janáček, have brought Czech Opera to a high level of modern conception, while in symphonic music V. Novák, Suk, Ostrčil, and Karel are leading Czech Art towards new paths. Lack of space alone and the difficulty of expressing a just and unbiased opinion prevent us from dealing more fully with the younger composers, of whom we shall take but a passing notice. In Slovakia so far the best attempts at the creation of original Slovak music were made by J. L. Bella (born 1843), Milan Lichard (1853), and V. Figuš-Bystrý (1875). Among the younger Slovak composers the best are M. Schneider-Trnavský, F. Kafenda, and V. Meličko. Apart from Novák and Janáček, who successfully exploited the wealth of Slovak popular music and attempted also to express the mentality of the Slovak people, Slovakia herself has not yet found her Smetana or Musorgskij.

Czech contemporary music has, on the whole, kept pace with modern music in other countries, yet its reliance on past tradition and its sincere effort at true artistic originality have as a rule saved it from many of the pitfalls into which fell many of the would-be modern composers in other countries. In place of Smetana's and Dvořák's "national" music comes individualism and subjectivism. Modern impressionism of Debussy and Ravel, of Richard Strauss and the Russian school, also left distinct marks on Novák, Suk, and Janáček. Impressionism in music means a danger, for it is not an idea, but only a method applied from

painting, and if employed only intellectually it deprives music of its intrinsic artistic merit as an expression of artistic sentiment. A similar danger lies in the technical development of modern music, which often is a mere repudiation of all accepted theories and principles without any artistic *raison d'être*. Suk and Novák have avoided these dangers by lending their impressionism the artistic background of a living idea, of inner sincerity and strength of construction, and by the use of new harmonies and new methods of composition only as a necessary means to an artistic end, while Janáček is consciously opposed to all musical complications and relies on intuition and realism alone.

The work of Vítězslav **Novák** (born 1870) has, as in the case of Dvořák, gone through several stages of development. All his works bear, nevertheless, the same sincere character, the same originality of rhythmically regular melodies, emotionalism, and a clear, energetic, and realistic expression, which often becomes passionate and eruptive. Novák is not as subjective as Suk, and the effect of his music lies rather in impressionistic modulations than in rhythm. If we look for those influences under which Novák developed, we shall find them in Dvořák and Brahms, in romanticism and in impressionism. Novák is essentially a romantic in his love of the erotic and of Nature. The mountains, the sea, the woods, and woman are the subjects by which his artistic imagination is most often inspired.

This musical Byronism is most pronounced in the early period of his musical development, when Novák stood under the influence of Schumann, Čajkovskij, and Liszt. In about 1895 Novák began to show an ethnological interest in Slovak folk-songs, which found their way also into his compositions, and lent them a new colour both melodically and harmonically. Novák's ambition was not, however, to create Slovak music. His music is but a reflection of impressions left on him by Slovak songs and Slovak surroundings and scenery. These impressions left a strong trace in his work, which, nevertheless, retained its originality, its lyric, subjective character, and which cannot, therefore, be called Slovak in the same way as Smetana's and Dvořák's

music is called Czech. This "nationalistic" period remains, however, in many respects the happiest period of his artistic career. In this connection we must mention also his masterly harmonizations of Slovak folk-songs, his cycles of songs "In the Twilight" and "Gipsy Melodies," his quartets in C major and D major, piano quintet and piano trio (op. 27) in one movement ("Quasi una Ballata"), composed on the theme of a Slovak folk-ballad, tragically emotional, as well as bold in structure and harmony. During the same period Novák composed four grand ballads for choir, "Sonata Eroica" for piano, and the symphonic poems "In the Tatra Mountains" and "The Slovak Suite," which have been performed also by Sir Henry Wood in London. In freedom of polyphony and orchestral technique these works, as well as the works which followed, show often a spiritual relationship with the works of modern French and German composers.

The beginning of a return to the previous romantic period is represented by two symphonic poems: "The Eternal Yearning," after the never attained ideal of love, and "Toman and the Wood-Nymph," on the subject of Čelakovský's poem, describing Novák's impressions of Nature and passionate outbursts of sensuous and ardent love. The works which followed, including also operas, represent a return from subjectivism to programme music.

From the works composed after 1910 the following are considered the best: The cantata "The Tempest," a sea symphony on the words of a poem by Svatopluk Čech for solo, choir, and orchestra, which describes the struggle of Fate hidden in Nature, with human love, and ends in a harmonious culmination; the cantata "The Spectre's Bride," in which Novák's love of the ballad form found a good subject for illustrating the mysterious forces of evil, dragging its victim towards perdition through gradual orgies of horror; the concert overture "Godiva"; and the symphonic poem "Pan," in five movements, which gives a picture of the modern man's relation to Nature. The last-mentioned work is a good example of Novák's impressionism, which does not stop at outward descriptions of Nature, but tries to inspire it with a deeper psychological meaning of the

relationship between mountains, sea, woods, and woman. The songs of Novák, especially the cycles "The Valley of a New Kingdom" and "Melancholy Love Songs," are of great interest, containing many remarkable innovations in song-writing which are being further developed by his pupils. His latest works are miniature compositions for voice and piano drawn from the life of children, being an attempt towards a new type of folk-lore opera. We shall speak later about Novák's comic operas.

The outstanding contemporary Czech composer is undoubtedly the other disciple of Dvořák, Josef **Suk** (born 1874), who is one of the greatest living composers of to-day. In his symphonies Suk is not only a great musician, but a great poet and philosopher as well. Suk's conception of music differs fundamentally both from that of Smetana and of Dvořák. Smetana's one ideal was to serve his nation and country, and to them were devoted all his thoughts and actions. Dvořák was no less a patriot, but his object was not to idealize his nation's history in music, for he believed in absolute music. His strong personality, deeply rooted in his native soil, gave his music, none the less, a thoroughly national character. Suk's conception of music, on the other hand, is purely subjective, personal, and human. He felt it his duty to express his personal feelings of happiness or suffering, to give a mirror of his own soul. There is nothing objective, nothing specially "national," about his music, even where it is apparently objective, as in the symphonic poem "Praga" or in the St. Venceslas meditations. And yet his soul, as reflected in his works, is the soul of the meditative, sensitive Czech, and is therefore no less Czech than the spirit of music of Smetana or Dvořák. In literature we find his equals in spirit in Sova and Březina, in music in Beethoven.

Subjectivism and lyricism has certainly its dangers. A person expressing always his own feelings is apt to appear egotistical, and his efforts at self-glorification and his emphasis of every personal feeling may in the end become narrow-minded and boring. Suk avoids this danger by a high conception of art, and by his philosophical and moral attitude, which allows him to see in himself only a sample of

humanity which he loves with all his heart. Some artists use their talents in order to embody their ideals in their works, imparting their personality only discreetly and indirectly to the character of these works. For Suk the world exists only as reflected in his own sensitive soul, and he has the rare faculty of expressing these impressions faithfully and sincerely. Suk lives the music which he writes. He creates from the inner impulse of his soul. And if one criterion of true art is sincerity, then he certainly is a great artist indeed.

From the subjective nature of Suk's music it follows that it is influenced by the different events and moods of his life. Suk's great talent was evident already at an early age. It is, indeed, difficult to believe that the "Barcarole," from his first quartet, was written at the age of fourteen, because it is not only technically perfect, but reveals also a great wealth of feeling and ideas. An equally interesting early work is the Ballad for quartet, written at the age of sixteen. It was then that Suk's father, who was a schoolmaster in an idyllic little village, Křečovice in South Bohemia, where even now Suk spends every year his vacations, sent him to the Prague Conservatoire. Fate had it that his teacher there became Dvořák, who not only had a great influence on his early development, but who also became his closest friend and father-in-law. Among Suk's earliest works, influenced by Dvořák, yet showing Suk's strong personality, are the string serenade in E flat major (op. 6), piano quintet (op. 8) composed in 1893 and known also in England in its revised form of 1915, and the string quartet in B flat major (op. 11). His first piano compositions (op. 7, including the famous "Chanson d'Amour" and op. 12) are the works of a complete master. Suk's piano pieces belong, indeed, to the best piano pieces in Czech musical literature.

Suk's love of Dvořák's daughter, Otylka, who later became his wife, inspired him to write the first deeper lyrical compositions. As in all his later works, Suk confides to music all his feelings, which at that time were those of a happy lover and husband. Their spirit is warm and sensitive. Thus arose his first melodrama, "Raduz a Mahulena," on Zeyer's text, his symphony in E major, full of melody,

joyous rhythm and life, and his symphonic poem, "Pod Jabloní" ("Under the Apple-tree"). From the same happy period date also the two piano cycles "Spring" and "Summer." Suk's music becomes more and more independent and original. Suk finds in impressionism the best means of expression for his feelings.

His great happiness seemed too good to be true. Suk's forebodings of approaching fate seem to have taken form in the "Fantasy" for violin and orchestra, in which for the first time the melody becomes incongruous and disrupted, the harmony more moving, and outbursts of dynamic contrasts and passionate outcries more frequent. The two works which followed, the "Scherzo Fantastique" and the symphonic poem "Praga," are a temporary return to the more classical form. "Praga," composed in Portugal, is a powerful expression of Suk's love of Prague as a modern city in historic attire.

At that time of his life Fate prepared a tragic blow for Suk as artist and man, for his great master Dvořák died. The blow was so painful that Suk could not but confide his sufferings to music. But before the first three parts of his "Asrael" were finished, an even greater misfortune befell him: his wife Otylka died too. The two remaining parts of "Asrael" were therefore devoted to the death of his wife. It has been said that "nothing makes us greater than a great suffering," and Suk had to learn this bitter truth when he wrote his immortal symphony to the Angel of Death at the moment of his greatest spiritual distress, when his soul was so sorely tried and filled with despair. Yet Suk's great faith in the Omnipotent and his devotion to Art did not let him succumb. He found consolation in Art by drawing inspiration from his own suffering in order to comfort himself as well as others. As he himself put it: "A work of art has only then its *raison d'être* when the artist can convincingly give comfort to others who suffer. That he can do only if he himself had gone through a great, soul-purifying suffering." "Asrael" is a nerve-racking composition, springing directly from his heart, a maddening dance of phantoms, a horrifying description of the steps of the approaching Majesty of Death, which cannot but deeply

impress the audience. Bold harmonies, fragments of melodies, and constantly changing rhythm become the medium of expression of supernatural sensations and inner sufferings.

Only slowly did Suk recover from these blows of Fate. In "The Summer Fairy-tale" the silent sighs of human sufferings struggle with the voices of Nature, which gradually gain supremacy. With a bitter, ironic smile Suk looks at the world, and with an eager soul he drinks from the cup of Nature the soothing and fortifying nectar of life. Technically speaking, Suk's means of expression remain the same as in "Asrael." Rich polyphony of harmonies, resulting often in apparent discords, complete freedom of rhythm and melody, great wealth of invention, and meticulousness in instrumentation are the chief characteristics of this work.

A similar mental disposition is disclosed also in his two piano cycles, "About Mother," devoted to his son, and "Through Life and Dream," in which are embodied Suk's reminiscences of a happier past, and in his string quartet (op. 31) in one movement. This quartet may well be described as the last word in chamber music on account of its form and technique. Each of the four instruments is a solo part, and there is a complete lack of monothematism, of regular rhythm or harmony in the old sense of the word. The quartet forms, nevertheless, a logical, organic unit.

Probably the greatest work which Suk has yet written is his last tone poem called "Zrání" ("Ripening"). Unfortunately it is a work of considerable dimensions which presents great technical difficulties, and even in Prague its production is but a rare occurrence, for it requires each time hard practice and numerous rehearsals. Finished in 1917, "Ripening" was fittingly performed for the first time two days after the proclamation of the Czechoslovak Republic, and it was at once declared Suk's *chef d'œuvre*. It is a great hymn to the Almighty, celebrating the composer's victorious triumph over inner sufferings. It teaches man wherein to seek salvation: in the consciousness of his own moral strength, in courage for work, and in the love of humanity.

It is a work which even the greatest artists create only at moments of their happiest inspiration. Suk's idea was to present an analogy between his own life, human life, and the growth of a blade of corn. He reviews his past life from a detached, superior standpoint of wisdom and aloofness: its painful episodes no longer hurt him. The various stages, founded on a poem by Sova, describe: first lessons in knowledge, stormy youth with its humorously titanic gestures, the bliss of first love, followed by passionate, joyous happiness, then a mighty storm of suffering, outcries of despair, recovery and resolution, leading to victory. His heart is filled with faith, hope, and love, with the joy of a golden field of ripe corn, basking quietly in radiant sunshine.

In technique Suk again surpassed himself. The rhythm is never regular, melody, founded on the natural accent of the Czech language, knows of no bar limitations, polyphony is built on chromatic scales, discords gravitate back towards tonic harmonies. But Suk never descends, like Strauss, to any vulgar, noisy dissonances in succession or to the mere colour effects of Debussy's impressionism. Every note has its artistic or psychological reason.

Suk's latest works express his feelings of patriotism stirred by the World War. The quartet on the hymn to St. Venceslas ("Meditations") and his "Legend" in homage to the fallen legionaries, composed in 1919, show Suk's sensitive soul, whose feelings of patriotism are part and parcel of his being.

Novák, Foerster, and Suk have brought up many pupils whose names we will mention without analysing or criticizing their works in detail. Emil **Axman** (born 1887), a pupil of V. Novák, embodies his modern tendencies in various vocal and orchestral and chamber music works, of which the best are a melodrama on Bezruč's poem "Only Once" and the symphonic poems "Grief and Hope," and "At Daybreak." In his latest works he has achieved remarkable success in Chamber Music, and his String Quartet and Piano Sonatas bear witness to a passionate character, full of musical impulses. B. **Martinů** (1890), a pupil of Suk and Albert Roussel, composed "The Czech Rhapsody" for

orchestra and choir, the ballets "Istar" and "The Christmas Carol," an orchestral piece called "Half-time" (impressions of a football match), as well as songs and chamber music. Jaroslav **Vogel** (1894) studied in Munich, with d'Indy in Paris, and with Novák in Prague. His best works include an orchestral suite in B flat major, a phantastic ballet called "The Experiment of Dr. Heidegger," and two operas. Jaromír **Weinberger** (1896) wrote symphonic works, piano music and songs, a ballet, as well as a musical setting to an old Slovak comedy; "Kocurkovo," by S. Chalupka. Otakar **Šín** (1881), Professor at the Prague Conservatoire, wrote a book on harmony and composed symphonic works and piano music. Jaroslav **Křička** (1882) lived three years in Russia, and Russian music, together with Novák and Suk, has influenced his works. His songs are particularly interesting by their original conception. His orchestral works include an overture to the "Blue Bird," the symphony "Adventus," a comic opera called "Hipolita," an opera for children called "Ogař," scenic music to Victor Dyk's "Wisdom of Don Quixote," and the cantata "The Temptation in the Desert," and several cycles of children's songs. Boleslav **Vomáčka** (1887), a pupil of Novák, has composed somewhat futuristic piano pieces, the symphonic poem "Youth," and cycles of songs and choirs. Modern tendencies are pursued also by the two great Czech pianists Vladimír **Polívka** (1896) and Dr. Václav **Štěpán** (1889), both Novák's pupils, who have composed songs, piano pieces, and chamber music. Other prominent contemporary composers include J. B. **Jiráček** (1891) and Ladislav **Vycpálek** (1882), also a pupil of Novák, whose best work is an excellent cantata called "About the Last Concerns of Man."

CONTEMPORARY CZECH OPERA.

The Czech opera of to-day no longer suffers from the defects of the early Czech opera, which consisted chiefly in poor librettos. Following the high aims of Smetana, who laid the foundations of modern Czech opera, and learning from the technical progress accomplished by Fibich, as well

as from the general progress of music in Bohemia and elsewhere, contemporary Czech opera has attained a high level of excellence, and in many respects surpassed the opera in other countries with older operatic tradition. The National Theatre has up to the present produced over fifty original Czech operas. Most of these do not, of course, form part of the regular repertoire, which includes chiefly Smetana's operas and some of Dvořák's and Fibich's works. Of the more modern operas the greatest popularity has been achieved by Kovařovic's "Psohlavci," Foerster's "Eva," Ostrčil's "Poupě," and Janáček's "Její Pastorkyňa" (Jenůfa).

A transition between the older and the contemporary school is formed by Nedbal and Kovařovic, both of whom excelled more as conductors than as composers. O. **Nedbal** (born 1874), a pupil of Dvořák, was first member of the Czech Quartet, which he left and went to Vienna, where he gained fame both as conductor and as composer of light operas and operettes. His operettes are graceful and attempt to avoid vulgarity. His earlier works include four ballets which are written in a light Czech spirit and gained considerable success in Prague. Nedbal is now chief of the opera in Bratislava. The best opera of Karel **Kovařovic** (1862-1921) is "Psohlavci" ("The Dog-headed Folk"), which owes its great popularity equally to the dramatic story of a peasants' rising, adapted after Jirásek's novel, and to Kovařovic's none too original, yet fresh, dramatic, and well-written music, reflecting the national spirit of Smetana and Dvořák. From 1900 until his death Kovařovic was chief of the opera in Prague, which he brought to a high level of excellence. London had the opportunity of judging his art as conductor at the Czechoslovak Festival held in London in May 1919. Kovařovic possessed the rare power of infusing emotional responsiveness into his orchestra, which he guided with a firm hand. Another great conductor is L. V. **Čelanský** (born in 1870), who in 1895 became conductor in Pilsen, and later in Zagreb, Lwow, Warsaw, and Kiev. At one time he was also conductor at the National Theatre, and in 1907 at the Vinohrady Theatre. In Lwow he founded the Lwow Philharmonic, and in Prague

conducted the Czech Philharmonic (in 1901), which still is, under the present able leadership of Václav Talich, the best Czech orchestra. Čelanský's talent as conductor was recognized not only in Bohemia, but also in Poland, Russia and France. Čelanský composed numerous songs and melodramas. His latest works are imbued with a religious, mystic spirit, and include the symphonic trilogy on "The Three Epochs" (Adam, Night, and Moses), a "Te Deum" and a "Hymn to the Sun."

Contemporary Czech opera developed as a rule on the principle of music drama, although it did not follow all Wagner's principles and developed in many ways independently. Stress is laid, above all, on the dramatic story. Melody and regular rhythm often give way to the effort of reproducing as faithfully as possible the natural accent of the spoken word and the character of the person singing on the stage, without the use of characteristic motives in the Wagnerian sense of the word. The singing seems to become one long recitative, the most important part being assigned to the orchestra, in which all the technical innovations of modern music are used in an effort to illustrate the atmosphere or the dramatic action on the stage. The means of musical expression, of course, vary according to the personality of each composer. A personality which stands quite apart is Janáček, who is a primitivist and realist in the best sense of the word, and is probably the most original contemporary Czech composer.

The general principles which we have just expounded are found, in the first place, in the operas of Vítězslav **Novák**, who has up to now written two comic operas, "The Imp of Zvíkov" (1915) and "The Lantern" (1924), and a music drama, "Karlštejn" (1920), dealing with the personality of Charles IV. In comic operas Novák has undoubtedly relied on the example of Smetana, though the music retains the same character as Novák's symphonic works. Novák's ironic and drastic humour shows him in a new light, while the chief value of "Karlštejn" seems to lie in the symphonic character of the orchestral part, in which Novák used the ancient Church modes.

One of the greatest living Czech composers is considered to be J. B. **Foerster** (born 1859), who lived for some time in Hamburg and Vienna, and is now Professor of Composition at the Prague Conservatoire. He first attracted attention by his symphonic and chamber music works, but became famous chiefly through his operas, which include "Debora" (1893), "Eva," on a peasant drama by G. Preissova, "Jessica," on an adaptation of *The Merchant of Venice*, "The Unconquered" (1919); and "Srdce" ("The Heart"), (1925). The first works of Foerster showed a sombre mentality, from which he later extricated himself to a manly, powerful, and religious expression. Foerster is, above all, a great master of harmony, through which is revealed a great depth of thought and fervently lyric feeling. Foerster's men's choirs belong to the most beautiful and vocally grateful choral works ever written on account of their perfect harmony, fluent melody, and originality.

Of great talent is Fibich's pupil, O. **Ostrčil** (born 1879), the present chief of the Prague opera. Ostrčil's music dramas include "Vlasta's Death" (1904), "Kunal's Eyes" (1908), and "A Legend of Erin" (1923). The greatest success was scored, however, by his one-act musical comedy "Poupě" ("The Bud"), which has an intelligent, witty libretto and fitting music. Ostrčil is a genius in musical invention, but it seems that his intellectualism, lacking in emotional depth, deprives his music often of psychological and dramatic depth. If Foerster is spiritually related to Smetana, Ostrčil represents the continuation of the Fibich tradition.

Among the last pupils of Dvořák was Rudolf **Karel** (born 1880), whose sound musical talent and daring, passionate temperament have been revealed already in his chamber music and symphonic works (in the symphonic epopee "Ideals," in the Renaissance C minor symphony, and in the symphonic poem "The Demon"). His first opera, "The Heart of Ilsea," on a story which reminds us of "La Bohême," was written in 1910, but was not produced at the National Theatre till 1925, when it gained great success. The music has lively, rich rhythm, daring harmonies, pleasant melodies, and is dramatic in the best sense of the word. Karel's music

has a character of its own and is evidently sincere. His latest works are influenced by his stay in Russia, where he lived from 1914 till 1920, and served also in the Czechoslovak legions. In Russia he wrote his violin concerto, the D major symphony, and the "Demon."

An interesting experiment is the opera of the young Czech composer Jan **Zelinka** (born 1896), called "Dceruška Hostinského" ("The Daughter of the Innkeeper"), produced for the first time in 1925. Zelinka is a pupil of Foerster and Ostrčil, from whom he learnt a great deal. He is obviously a talented composer. Unfortunately his opera has the fatal fault that the orchestral music is not always related to the text of the play, and that the singing parts are not vocal enough, being often but senseless accumulations of sounds without any melody or any artistic reason. Zelinka has written also a number of other compositions, especially songs, a symphonic overture, and various piano pieces.

An even more youthful composer is Emil **Němeček** (born 1902), who started composing at the age of eight. His first opera, on Vrchlický's words, was written when he was but thirteen years of age. In 1916 he wrote his second opera on Jirásek's play, "The Lantern," and in 1918 a third opera in one act, called "The Queen's Mistake," which was performed at the National Theatre in 1922, and surprised the public by its accomplished form and freshness of invention. The young composer also wrote a 'cello and a violin sonata, various songs and choirs, and a cantata called "The Chant of Intoxication."

Among other contemporary opera writers we may but briefly mention Otakar **Zich** (1879), whose second opera, "Vina" ("The Guilt"), gained considerable success in 1922; Jaroslav **Jeremiáš** (1889-1919), who composed an excellent oratorio on John Hus and an opera called "The Old King"; his brother, Otakar **Jeremiáš** (born 1892), who wrote two symphonies and is now composing an opera on the story of the Brothers Karamazov, and Rudolf **Zamrzla** (1869), who lived for some time in Russia and composed two operas, "The Wedding Night" and "Samson."

Last, but not least, we shall speak of the extremely

interesting and strong personality which in modern Czech musical life represents the Moravian composer **Leoš Janáček** (born 1854), who had to wait a long time for a recognition of his genius, and who still remains, though over seventy years of age, in many ways our most modern composer of to-day. His famous and probably best opera "*Její Pastorkyňa*" ("*Jenufa, her Foster-daughter*"), which was preceded by two lesser so far unproduced operas, "*Šárka*" (1881) and "*The Beginning of a Novel*" (1894), was performed for the first time in Brno in 1904, but the National Theatre in Prague refused to perform it until 1916, when it at once gained a tremendous success. Its merits were then recognized not only by the Czech public, but also by foreign opinion. Dr. Max Brod, a prominent German writer, "discovered" him, and wrote enthusiastically about his talent, while a few years later Mrs. Rosa Newmarch drew the attention of the English-speaking public to his music dramas. "*Jenufa*" has since been played also in Vienna, Berlin, New York (1924), and other cities with great success.

The opposition to Janáček was due not only to his original and unconventional conception of composition, but also to miscomprehension. Prominent Czech musical critics, with Professor Nejedlý at the head, accused Janáček of being, above all, a theoretician, who writes music not from inner inspiration, but in order to put his "impossible" theories into practice, including the use or imitation of folk-songs and of the intonation of spoken words in opera. General opinion to-day, however, seems to subscribe rather to the views of Max Brod, who holds that Janáček is a true artist, composing independently of his theoretical and folk-lore studies, although in agreement with them. Janáček's theories are an outcome of his artistic experience, and not vice versa.

Janáček's music reveals his whole character—a boisterous, crude, and obstinate temperament, behind which is hidden a sensitive, shy, and dreamy soul. The outward shell, revealed in his aversion to long, "sleepy" notes, in abrupt phrasing, in fiery, heart-rending effects and bold harmonies, serves to protect the delicate character of the rest of his

music which predominates, and shows his soul in its true light. His great sensitiveness is, above all, apparent in economy of technical means, in the finesse of his rhythm and modulation, and in his aversion to pompous polyphony and complicated scoring which so often takes place of artistic depth in modern music. Janáček is, in short, a primitivist in the best sense of the word, for his primitivism is not synonymous with barbarism, but stands for refined simplicity and artistic purity. His extreme sensitiveness, which lends his music a tragically sombre character, is fortunately saved from morbidity by his naturally boisterous temperament, his optimistic outlook, and his strong and original personality. As a thinker he is a humanitarian; in all his works we find compassion for downtrodden, helpless, lonely, weak, and erring human individuals, saved from perdition by their inborn purity and idealism. This, combined with his ability to attain great effects by the simplest means, lends his music a great artistic and psychological depth. He writes only that which he considers absolutely indispensable.

In nature and temperament Janáček differs profoundly from Smetana. Smetana's music is joyous and has a pathetic, lofty grandeur, while Janáček's music as a rule is sombre, intimate, or tragically boisterous. Janáček did not like Smetana's regular four-beat bar, and his harmony built pre-eminently on the interchanging recurrence of the tonic and the dominant, yet he always had the greatest respect for Smetana's artistic achievement as a whole. As a matter of fact both composers had many artistic ideals in common. Both were tone-philosophers, both paid great attention to folk-song study, and both were led by the idea of expressing the soul of their people through music. Like Smetana Janáček never descends to the imitation or quotation of a folk-song. Even where in his operas we find a melody purporting to be a folk-song or dance it is of his own invention. His whole composition, in fact, strives to follow the mental process of a popular composer. Even more consequently and more realistically than Smetana, Janáček tries to express through his own means as a modern musician the spirit of the people, their mentality and ways

of speaking and singing. His extensive studies of Slovak folk-songs, his notations of the voice intonation of the popular way of speaking, and also of sounds produced by animals and by Nature generally, served to enrich his musical expression in contrast to current conventions. He learns from Nature, without expressly trying to copy it, for he knows well that the duty of the artist is not so much to describe life and Nature as to complete and enrich them. Janáček himself explains his convictions as follows: "Inner inspiration is a composer's defence against a too pronounced naturalism. It is the reason of the originality of his work. What should I be without a peculiar fructification of my emotions, without the brains and blood inherited from ancestors, and without the beauties of Nature surrounding me. Sentiment makes a composer. Not the scientific, but the emotional foundation matters. I wonder at the thousand-fold rhythmical aspects of the world of light, colour, tone, and matter, and my own tones grow younger through the eternal rhythmic youth of the eternally young Nature."

It follows that we must speak of Janáček's realism with reservations. Although in no way dependent on Musorgskij, Janáček presents a curious resemblance to him in respect of realism and economy of means.¹ Like Janáček, Musorgskij demanded "a closer relationship of music with actual life," and wanted "assiduously to seek the more delicate and subtle features of human nature—of the human crowd—to follow them into unknown regions and make them our own." Janáček came to the same conclusion independently and by other ways than Musorgskij, for he stayed in Russia only a short time in 1896. Janáček held very independent views on theory and composition already in his youth. He was the seventh child out of eleven children of a poor school-master in a North Moravian village, and his humble origin taught him to fight his own way in life. His first teacher was Křížkovský. Later (in 1874) he went to Prague, where he studied harmony with Blažek and theory with Skuherský. Skuherský himself was a great theoretician, who proclaimed melody and one voice composition to be the basis of all study, and allowed harmonies to be formed from any

¹ See Mrs. Rosa Newmarch, *The Russian Opera*.

given intervals. His views, and especially those of Helmholtz about tone feeling, influenced Janáček and contributed towards his own independence from current conventions. Janáček studied later also in Leipzig (with Grill) and in Vienna, but there he learnt nothing very useful, as he himself admits. Much later (in 1913) he studied Wundt's *Physiological Psychology*, in which he found a confirmation of his own views on the psychology of composition and freedom of musical (tone) thinking. Janáček's theoretical views are embodied in *The Guidebook to the Composition of Chords and their Resolutions* (1897), in *The Guidebook to Harmony* (1912); and in a book *About the Folk-songs of Moravia* (1901). Janáček studied also with great care the substance and the effects of folk-songs and of speech-intonation. He wrote many articles and essays on folklore generally. During his whole life Janáček has served as professor at the Schoolmasters' Institute in Brno, where in 1881 he founded the School of Organists of which he became Director.

Janáček's compositions are many. His orchestral works include a suite (1877), an idyll (1880), folk-dances for orchestra (1894), an orchestral ballad called "The Fiddler's Child" (1912), a rhapsody on "Taras Bulba" (1917), a symphonic poem on the "Ballad of Blaník" (1920), the works for mixed choirs, "Amarus," "Paternoster," "The Eternal Gospel," etc. Very characteristic are also his men's choirs. Being himself a son of the people of Bezruč's native soil, he chose with preference Bezruč's poems for his choirs ("Kantor Halfar," "Maryčka Magdónova," "70,000"). These works present such technical difficulties that they were for a long time considered unsingable, until the Prague and Moravian Teachers' Societies proved the contrary. His latest choral work, with a soprano solo, is called "The Wandering Madman," and is composed on the words of a poem by Rabindranath Tagore.

Among Janáček's operas the best-known remains "Jenufa" ("Její Pastorkyňa"), on a realistic drama by Gabriela Preissová, which reveals great psychological insight and great idealism. Janáček's music reflects faithfully both the mentality of the characters and the general atmo-

sphere of the play. Although realistic, it never becomes recitative, but on the contrary contains fluent melodies, written with an intuitive understanding of popular psychology and with a fine sense of style and of dramatic effect. The presence of melodies and choirs, and the absence of characteristic motives and declamatory style in the Wagnerian sense of the word, prove that it is by no means necessary to follow Wagner slavishly in order to achieve a perfect music drama.

Other operas of Janáček which have been or are going to be produced shortly in Czechoslovakia and Germany include "Mr. Brouček's Excursions to the Moon and to the Fifteenth Century," on the story of Svatopluk Čech, "Káta Kabanová," and "Liška Bystrouška." The "Excursions," composed in 1914, first produced in 1920, gave Janáček an opportunity of demonstrating that he was capable of writing also in a lighter style. The music of this comic opera is, in harmony with the text, humorous and full of life. Unfortunately the libretto is too specifically Czech, and the music gives an impression of mere improvisation. "Káta Kabanová" (1922), on the revised text of Ostrovsky's drama "The Tempest," with its tragically sombre, realistic story from Russian life, no doubt suited better Janáček's temperament. It is a deep and conscientious work of the same kind as "Jenufa." Max Brod calls it "the ripe fruit, while 'Jenufa' was the blossom of sometimes illogical, dreamy colours," but he adds at once that he prefers the blossom to the ripe fruit. In 1923 Janáček finished "Liška Bystrouška" ("The Sly Fox"), in which all the acting and singing is left to the animal world. Even the trees and flowers sing in a way of their own. Janáček is at present (1925) occupied in composing an opera on the text of Karel Čapek's drama, "The Case of Macropulos," which tempted him, no doubt, by its remote atmosphere of past times, as well as by its philosophical background.

An interesting work which stands quite apart is Janáček's setting of "The Diary of a Lost Youth." It once happened that in a remote Moravian village a young boy disappeared, and on inquiry it was found that he ran away with a Gipsy girl, leaving behind a diary, consisting of twenty-two poems,

in which he described in pictures of elemental, sensuous beauty his infatuation and his mental sufferings at the dilemma offered by the choice between conventional life at home and the wild, pagan life with the Gipsies. The subject and the natural beauty of the poems appealed greatly to Janáček's imagination. The form of this composition, which has been produced not only in Prague, but also in London, Paris, and Berlin, is unusual. The first verses about love's awakening are sung by the tenor with piano accompaniment. Then follows an alto solo by the Gipsy girl with occasional cymbal-like chords on the piano. After that two sopranos and an alto sing behind the scene, expressing the voices of Nature and Fate. After an intermezzo for piano solo the tenor sings about the boy's pangs of conscience, about the madness of love orgies, and finally about his resignation to the Fate which bids him to follow his elected wife in life regardless of hardships.

The most talented of Janáček's pupils are Jan **Kunc** (born 1883), whose choral compositions especially are of great value, and Osvald **Chlubna** (1893), who composed several symphonic works and an opera called "Catulla's Revenge."

In speculating on the present-day composers of Czechoslovakia and on the future prospects of music in Bohemia, we may ask whether individualism and modernist tendencies do not predominate at the expense of an original, national spirit. To this question Suk replies in the Polish review *Muzyka* (July 1925) in the negative. Whether we agree with all the works of the contemporary composers or not, we cannot arbitrarily deny their national character. National music does not mean, of course, only that music which relies on folk-lore or makes use of the rhythmic formulas of popular music. All music, composed by an artist, who is imbued with the national spirit, is national. Its national character prevails despite all foreign stylistic and formal influence, and despite the composer's strong individuality. A modern form of construction does no harm to the national character of music, but widens its outlook and unites it with the spirit of the times. According to Suk, Czech music always gained through contact with

the music of other nations. True art cannot be learned and is not contagious, and a nation, therefore, possessing a distinct racial character, as well as truly artistic, original talents, does not need to fear foreign influence. The fact that Czech composers did not close their ears to foreign music enabled them to enrich their style, widen their horizon, and raise their æsthetic standards and degree of technical excellence. Similarly, individualism cannot affect the national character of music. Even our youngest contemporary composers, with diverse creative methods and individualistic modern leanings, are deeply united with the collective soul of their nation. "The whole mysterious charm of artistic creation," says Suk, "consists in the fact that even its lyrical expressions have always a collective character. In the artist's soul, as in a mirror, the soul of the nation is reflected." Thus even Suk's own personal, purely subjective "Asrael" has been described as an epic work on account of its all-human interest and dramatic pathos. "National" music is not a special kind of music, with rigid forms of its own. It is deeply rooted in the soil of Society and of its own times. "Only a musical work, reflecting the spirit of the times and the feelings and aspirations of the collective soul of the nation, is a national work."

It follows that the future prospects of our music do not lie in cosmopolitanism, but in nationalism and internationalism in the sense of the words quoted above, and in the adherence to those sound principles of art on which it relied in the past. Fortunately, most of the contemporary Czech composers are still guided by that idealism in Art which alone leads to progress, whenever combined with a sincere effort at finding new paths towards the solution of the noble mysteries of Beauty, Nature, and Life.

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INDEX

- Acton, Lord, 122
 Aerenthal, Count, 188, 193, 194
 Albert, Habsburg, 80
 Amerling, 144
 Andrassy, Count J., 176
 Andersen, J., 117
 Apt, A., 324, 340
 Ariosto, 229, 251
 Aristotle, 49, 57
 Armand, Major, 202
 Augusta, John, 89, 90
 Axmann, E., 357
- Bach, A., 156, 157, 328
 Bach, J. S., 318, 319, 322
 Bacon, F., 117
 Badeni, Count, 176, 192 sq.
 Bakunin, 155, 156
 Balbín, 103, 106, 109, 112
 Balfour, A. J., 199, 202
 Balzac, H. de, 251
 Banffy, Baron, 307
 Barrie, J. M., 290
 Bartoš, F., 314, 324
 Beaudelaire, C., 251, 256
 Beaufort, Bishop H., 69
 Beethoven, L. van, 318, 340, 354
 Bel, M., 300, 302
 Belagius, Bishop, 53
 Belcredi, 173
 Bella, A., 312
 Bella, J. L., 350
 Benda, G., 319, 350
 Bendl, K., 339, 340
 Benedikti, 299
 Beneš, Dr. E., 196 sq.
 Beneš z Hořovic, 44
 Beneš z Veitmile, 44, 315
 Beneš-Třebitzský, V., 261 sq.
 Bennett, A., 290
 Berchtold, Count, 194 sq.
 Berlioz, H., 324, 327, 328, 340
 Bernolák, A., 145, 301
- Bethlen, G., 120
 Beust, 173, 175
 Bezruč, P., 257, 272, 279 sq., 366
 Bismarck, Prince O., 123, 125, 177, 191
 Björnson, B., 131, 270
 Blaho, P., 311
 Blahoslav, John, 90, 317
 Boleslav I (the Cruel), 29, 33
 Boleslav the Brave, 35
 Bolzano, B., 137, 141
 Bořivoj (Prince), 32, 33
 Botto, J., 305
 Bourbon, Prince Sixte, 202
 Brahms, J., 323, 326 sq.
 Brailsford, H. N., 204
 Brauner, Dr., 150
 Brentano, 231
 Břetislav I, 35
 Březina, O., 221, 273, 283 sq., 353
 Brod, M., 363, 367
 Browne, Sir T., 221
 Browning, R., 251, 254
 Bryce, Lord J., 203
 Bubna, 119, 120
 Budovec z Budova, 93, 101
 Bülow, Hans, 327, 345
 Bunyan, J., 117
 Burian, Count, 195, 207
 Burns, R., 228, 231, 248
 Burrows, Dr. R., 203
 Buxton, N., 202, 204
 Byrd, W., 313
 Byron, Lord, 230, 233, 238, 247, 251, 305, 349
- Čaják, J., 312
 Čajkovsky (*see* Tschaikowski)
 Calderon, 251, 290
 Calvin, 62, 63
 Canning, 125
 Čapek, K., 295 sq., 367
 Čapek-Chod, K. M., 268 sq.

- Caraffa, 100
 Carducci, 251, 254
 Carlyle, T., 61, 63, 273
 Casimir, 84
 Castlereagh, 125
 Cato, 58
 Cavour, 123
 Čech, S., 229, 246 sq., 265, 275, 287, 309, 352, 366
 Čechov, A. P., 240, 290, 291
 Cecil, Lord R., 202
 Čelakovský, F. L., 230 sq., 314, 352
 Čelanský, L. V., 359
 Celts, 23, 24, 25, 249
 Černohorský, B. M., 318, 319
 Chaloupecký, V., 299
 Chalupka, J., 306
 Chalupka, S., 305, 358
 Chalupný, Dr., 166
 Charlemagne, 30, 249
 Charles IV., 19, 32, 41 sq., 314, 360
 Chateaubriand, 141, 229
 Chatterton, 181
 Chelčický, P., 17, 67, 70, 76 sq., 226, 283
 Chlubna, O., 368
 Chopin, F., 221, 324, 326, 330, 337
 Clam-Martinic (Counts), 176, 179, 202
 Clemenceau, G., 215
 Coleridge, T., 248
 Comenius (*see* Komenský)
 Corneille, 251
 Cosmas, 29, 31, 39
 Cromwell, 66, 120
 Cyril, St., 30, 32, 44, 54, 183, 301, 314, 322
 Czech Quartet, 313, 335, 348
 Czernin, Count O., 202 sq.
 Czernin (family of), 102, 106

 Dalimil, 29, 39, 97, 110
 Dante, 117, 251, 252, 255
 Darwin, C., 253
 Debussy, C., 350
 Denis, Prof. E., 17, 52, 55, 77, 91, 93, 107, 110, 112, 128, 135, 197, 307
 Denmark, 119
 Destinová, E., 313, 335
 Dewey, J., 296
 Deym, 138, 150
 Dickens, C., 236
 Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield), 124, 126
 Dlouhoveský, J. H., 318
 Dobrovský, J., 132, 140 sq., 167, 220, 229, 230
 Dostoievsky, 131, 182, 228, 267, 268, 269
 Dubé, Ondřej z, 44
 Dumas, A., 251, 262
 Dušík (Dussek), L., 319
 Dvořák, Antonín, 172, 221, 252, 258, 322, 333, 335 sq., 348, 354, 355, 361
 Dvořák, Arne, 292
 Dyk, Victor, 287, 292, 358

 Elgar, Sir E., 221
 Emerson, 223, 273, 283
 Eneas Sylvius (Pope Pius II), 55, 72, 83
 England, English, 21, 23, 56, 66, 99, 108, 111, 113, 119, 125, 126, 198, 201, 257, 272, 344
 Erben, K. J., 221, 230, 232 sq., 238, 241, 242, 314, 324, 347, 349
 Evans, Sir Arthur, 203

 Ferdinand I, 86 sq., 317
 Ferdinand II, 95, 100 sq., 166, 293, 317
 Ferdinand III, 105, 126
 Fibich, Z., 256, 323, 348 sq., 361
 Figulus, D. E., 109, 120
 Figuš-Bystrý, V., 350
 Fischer, O., 292
 Foerster, J. B., 357, 360
 Forgách, Count, 195
 France, French, 23, 42, 64, 116, 124, 130, 190, 198, 217, 241, 264, 272, 316, 350
 France, Anatole, 251
 Francis II, 133, 135
 Francis Ferdinand, Archduke, 193
 Francis Joseph I, 103, 157, 173, 175 sq.
 Francke, A. H., 112
 Frederick of the Palatinate, 98 sq., 101
 Frič, J. V., 156, 174

 Gaj, L., 144
 Galsworthy, J., 290
 Garibaldi, G., 123

- Gautier, P. de Chatillon, 39
 Gautier, T., 249
 Gebauer, Prof. J., 182
 Geer, L. de, 111, 112
 Gladstone, W. E., 123, 149, 206, 307
 Gluck, C. W., 318, 319, 320
 Goethe, W., 131, 137, 228, 231, 251, 252, 259, 290, 310
 Gogol, N. V., 139, 166
 Goluchowski, Count, 173, 192
 Gončarov, 228
 Gorki, M., 219
 Goudimel, C., 316
 Great Britain (*see* England)
 Grieg, E., 221
 Gustav, Adolf, 119
- Haendel, G. F., 318
 Hájek, V., 107
 Hálek, V., 229, 233, 236, 237 sq., 257, 275
 Hanslick, 340, 343
 Harrant z Polžic, 101, 316
 Havlíček, K., 19, 20, 138, 147 sq., 183, 220, 236, 272, 275
 Haydn, J., 318
 Heine, H., 231, 238, 240, 241, 242, 287
 Helfert, J. A., 61
 Hennequin, 273
 Herbart, J. F., 118
 Herben, J., 257, 265 sq.
 Herder, J. G., 20, 27, 138 sq., 142, 231, 301
 Heyduk, A., 233, 243 sq., 281, 308, 310
 Hilar, K., 290
 Hilbert, J., 291
 Hlinka, Father, 303
 Hodža, Milan, 311
 Hodža, Miloslav, 304 sq.
 Hoetzendorf, C., 193, 194
 Hoffmann, K., 324, 348
 Holeček, J., 265, 308
 Hollar, V., 109
 Holý, J., 301, 310
 Homer, 301
 Hostinský, Prof. O., 324, 331, 336
 Huerta, Don M., 100
 Hugo, V., 251, 252, 272, 276
 Hurban M., 145, 304 sq.
 Hurban Vajanský S., 308, 310 sq.
- Hus, John, 17, 18, 43, 46, 52 sq., 112, 120, 136, 140, 160, 183, 226, 264
 Hviezdoslav, P. Országh, 301, 308 sq.
 Hyndman, H. M., 205
- Ibsen, H., 182, 251, 257, 259, 290, 294
 Ireland, 23, 249
 Italy, Italian, 23, 36, 97, 104, 116, 123, 134, 143, 198, 207, 217, 254, 294, 318, 320
 Izvolski, M., 193, 194
- Jagello (*see* Vladislav Jagello)
 Jagić, Prof., 145
 Jakoubek ze Stríbra, 55, 68, 70
 James, W., 296
 Janáček, L., 322, 337, 350, 360, 362 sq.
 Jelačić, General, 159
 Jenštejn, Archbishop, 314
 Jeremiáš, J. and O., 362
 Jerome of Prague, 55, 56
 Jesenský, J., 312
 Jessenius, 101, 299
 Jiráek, J. B., 358
 Jiráek, A., 221, 262 sq., 267, 292, 362
 Jiskra z Brandýsa, 74, 75, 307
 Joachim, 344
 Joan of Arc, 62
 Joseph II, 103, 105, 126, 128 sq., 168, 302, 316
 Jugoslavs, 19, 27, 30, 90, 125, 142, 153, 174, 188, 207, 306, 335, 342
 Jungmann J., 132, 141 sq., 229
 Juriga, Deputy, 307
- Kadner, Prof., 118
 Kafenda, F., 350
 Kálal, J., 308
 Kalinčák, J., 306, 310
 Kalousek, J., 152, 175
 Kant, I., 139, 141, 160
 Karásek ze Lvovic, 256, 273, 286
 Karel, R., 361
 Karl, Gustav, 120
 Keats, J., 228
 Kellner-Hostinský, 307
 Kinský (family of), 119, 136, 318
 Kirějevsky, 142, 219

- Kittl, J. B., 324
 Klostermann, K., 265
 Kocián, J., 313, 324
 Kollár, J., 75, 132, 138, 142 sq., 160, 161, 219, 220, 230 sq., 301, 314
 Kolovrat (family of), 105, 136
 Komenský, J. A., 17, 19, 107, 109 sq., 120, 122, 135, 220, 283, 293, 316
 Konyas, A., 102
 Kopernik, 122
 Kopta, J., 289
 Kossuth, L., 159, 177, 302
 Kovařovic, K., 358 sq.
 Král, J., 305
 Kramář, K., 178, 187, 188, 192, 193
 Krasínski, Z., 139, 232, 254, 290
 Krasko, J., 312
 Krásnohorská, E., 247, 310
 Krčmery, Prof., 299
 Krejčí, F. V., 294
 Krejčí, J., 339, 340
 Křička, J., 324, 358
 Křížkovský, P., 322, 324, 326, 365
 Krman, D., 300
 Kubany, L., 307
 Kubelík, J., 313, 324
 Kukučín, M., 301, 310, 312
 Kunc, J., 368

 Ladislav, Posthumus, 74, 80
 Langer, F., 289, 292
 League of Nations, 17, 20, 22, 82, 191
 Leconte de Lisle, 251, 252, 254
 Lenz, A., 61
 Leopold I, 127, 144
 Leopold II, 132
 Lepicier, 61
 Leroy-Beaulieu, 218, 219
 Lessing, 138, 229
 Libuše, 29, 332
 Lichard, M., 350
 Lichnowski, Prince, 194
 Liechtenstein, Prince, 100, 102, 103
 List, F., 177
 Liszt, F., 322, 323, 324, 326 sq., 340, 341, 345
 Lloyd George, D., 206, 215
 Lobkovic (family of), 94, 96, 105, 106, 318
 Lom, S., 294
 Longfellow, H. W., 248

 Louis, I., 85
 Loyola, I., 102
 Lucas, Brother, 79, 84, 91
 Luther, M., 61, 62
 Lützow, Count F., 49, 110, 117
 Luxembourg, John of, 40 sq.
 Luyton, C., 317

 Mácha, K. H., 229, 230, 233 sq., 241, 274, 305
 Machar, J. S., 220, 237, 257, 272, 274 sq., 287
 Macpherson, 181
 Maeterlinck, M., 256, 283, 290
 Mahen, J., 295
 Mahler, G., 335
 Maria, J., 294
 Maria Theresa, 103, 127, 132 sq., 158
 Markovič, J., 311
 Marten, M., 283, 287
 Martinic, 94, 105
 Martinů, B., 357
 Masaryk, Prof. T. G., 17, 20, 68, 126, 140, 161, 167, 172, 178 sq., 195 sq., 217, 218, 220, 222, 256, 271, 311
 Matthew (Matthias), King of Hungary, 75, 84
 Matthew (Matthias), Emperor, 94, 95, 98, 293
 Matthew of Genoa, 46 sq., 55
 Maupassant, G. de, 251
 Mayr, J., 329
 Mazzini, 123, 146, 147
 Medek, R., 289
 Meličko, V., 350
 Mendelssohn, 324, 339
 Methodius, St., 30, 33, 44, 54, 183, 301, 314, 322
 Metternich, Prince, 134 sq., 147
 Meyerbeer, G., 339
 Michelangelo, 224, 251
 Michelet, J., 118
 Mickiewicz, 131, 139, 187, 219, 229, 238, 247, 251, 310
 Milič, J. z Kroměříže, 44 sq.
 Milton, J., 141, 227, 229
 Mojmír, 30
 Molière, 251, 290
 Monroe, W., 110
 Montaigne, 229
 Moore, A. W., 296

- More, T., 117
 Mowat, R. B., 190
 Mozart, W. A., 245, 318, 320, 330
 Mrštík, V. and A., 257, 267
 Musorgsky, 350, 365
 Myslivecek, J., 319
- Napoleon Bonaparte, 66, 124, 143, 276
 Napoleon III, 175
 Nedbal, O., 348, 359
 Neff, J., 342
 Nejedlý, Prof. Z., 349, 363
 Němcová, B., 235 sq., 264, 308
 Němeček, E., 362
 Neruda, J., 110, 220, 236, 239 sq., 253, 272, 274, 287, 311, 329
 Neumann, S. K., 287
 Newmarch, Rosa, 255, 363, 365
 Newton, Sir I., 122
 Nezval, V., 289
 Niederle, Prof. L., 28
 Nietzsche, 182, 257, 276
 Nostic (Counts), 136, 151, 320
 Novák, V., 322, 348, 350, 351 sq., 357, 360
 Nováková, T., 265
- O'Connell, D., 148
 Olbracht, Ivan, 287
 Oldřich, Prince, 31, 35, 40
 Ondříček, F., 324
 Ostrčil, O., 249, 359, 361
 Ostrovsky, 367
 Osuský, Dr. S., 199
 Oxenstjerna, Count A., 111, 119
- Palacký, F., 17, 18, 33, 40, 49, 54, 93, 110, 125, 132, 135, 138, 140, 147 sq., 184, 187, 220, 229, 263
 Palárik, J., 306
 Palestrina, 316
 Palkovič, G., 145, 302
 Palmerston, Lord, 125, 206
 Pascal, B., 227
 Pauliny-Toth, V., 306
 Pavlů, B., 311
 Payne, Peter, 57, 72
 Pekař, Prof. J., 93, 102, 108, 263
 Percy, T., 231
 Pestalozzi, 112
 Petőfi, A., 251
- Petrarca, 45, 229, 230, 251
 Pierce, C. S., 296
 Pivoda, F., 324, 331, 332
 Plato, 223
 Poděbrad, King George, 75 sq., 87
 Poe, E. A., 251
 Poland, Polish, 19, 25, 27, 28, 35, 84, 89, 93, 111, 123, 125, 139, 148, 165, 193, 208, 246, 253, 321, 330, 337
 Polívka, V., 358
 Preissová, G., 265, 266, 361, 366
 Přemysl, 18, 29
 Přemysl Otakar I, 36
 Přemysl Otakar II, 38 sq.
 Příhoda, V., 324
 Prokop the Great, 66, 69 sq.
 Proksch, J., 324, 327
 Purcell, H., 313
 Puškin, 139, 228, 238, 247, 305, 310, 312
- Rabelais, 166, 229
 Radziwill (Princes), 90, 307
 Rais, K. V., 264 sq.
 Rakoczy, S., 118, 120
 Ravel, 350
 Rázus, M., 312
 Rejcha, A., 319
 Revertera, Count, 202
 Richard II, 56
 Richter, H., 345
 Rieger, F. L., 151, 158, 159, 173 sq., 183, 245
 Rokycana, J., 72, 78, 80, 84
 Rosenbergs, 80, 317
 Rostislav, 30 sq., 322
 Rossetti, D. G., 251
 Rostand, E., 251, 290
 Rousseau, J. J., 78, 112, 115, 122, 138, 139, 166, 228, 231, 319, 350
 Roussel, A., 357
 Rudolf II, 87 sq., 261, 317
 Ruskin, J., 221, 223, 273, 303
 Russell, J. E., 296
 Russia, Russian, 19, 21, 27, 54, 115, 123, 125, 139, 162, 164, 175, 191, 193, 201, 219, 228, 235, 246, 256, 269, 272, 304, 335, 350
- Šafařík, P. J., 132, 142, 144 sq., 159, 229, 302
 Šalda, F. X., 256, 273, 294

- Samo, 30, 35
 Sand, G., 244
 Scandinavia, 23, 25, 124, 143, 218, 235, 249, 264
 Schiller, F. C. S., 296
 Schiller, J. C. F., 251, 290, 310
 Schneider-Trnavský, M., 350
 Schubert, F., 221, 319, 336
 Schulz, I., 288
 Schumann, R., 221, 324, 328, 341, 349
 Scott, Sir W., 232, 262
 Seidler, Premier, 206
 Selver, P., 280, 284
 Serbia (*see* Jugoslavs)
 Seton-Watson, R. W., 189, 203, 303, 307, 321
 Ševčík, Prof. O., 324
 Ševčík, Quartet, 313
 Shakespeare, W., 166, 222, 239, 245, 248, 255, 259, 290, 328, 334
 Shaw, G. B., 279, 290
 Shelley, P. B., 228, 251, 256, 290
 Sigismund, August, 89
 Sigismund, Emperor, 50, 60, 67 sq.
 Šimáček, M. A., 268
 Simrock, 342 sq.
 Šín, O., 358
 Skála, P., *ze Zhoře*, 109
 Škroup, D. I., 326, 329
 Sládek, J. V., 245, 248, 257
 Sládkovič, O., 305, 309, 310
 Sladkovský, K., 179, 183
 Slavata, 94, 102, 105
 Šlejhar, J. K., 267
 Šlik, Count, 96, 101
 Slowacki, J., 139, 290, 310
 Smetana, B., 172, 221, 239, 240, 252, 258, 262, 313, 322, 323, 325 sq., 336, 348, 353, 360, 364
 Soběslav I (Prince), 36
 Socrates, 118
 Sonnino, Baron, 201
 Sorel, A., 123, 128
 Sova, A., 221, 273, 281 sq., 353, 356
 Spain, 97, 104, 116, 143
 Spencer, H., 253
 Šrámek, F., 287, 295
 Šrobár, V., 311
 Stadion, Count R., 151
 Stamitz, J. V., 319
 Staněk, Deputy, 207
 Steed, Henry Wickham, 189, 203
 Štefánek, A., 311
 Štefánik, M. R., 197, 200
 Štěpán, V., 358
 Sternberg, Count, 132, 137
 Štítný, T., 46 sq., 54, 283, 315
 Stolypin, 193
 Stránský, Pavel, 32, 96, 104, 107, 109 sq.
 Stránský, Deputy, 207
 Strauss, R., 350, 357
 Strindberg, A., 268, 290
 Stuart, H. W., 296
 Štur, L., 145, 156, 302 sq., 310, 311
 Suk, J., 172, 282, 348, 350, 353 sq., 368
 Sumín, J., 266
 Sušil, F., 314, 324
 Svatopluk, 30, 33, 35, 301, 322
 Světlá, K., 241, 244 sq., 264
 Svoboda, F. X., 257
 Svobodová, R., 266, 269 sq.
 Sweden, Swedish, 99, 108, 111, 116, 124, 248
 Swift, Dean J., 166
 Swinburne, A. C., 251, 283
 Synge, J. M., 290
 Szilaszy, Baron, 194
 Taaffe, Count, 179
 Tablic, B., 310
 Tagore, Sir R., 114, 122, 169
 Tajovský, J. G., 312
 Talich, V., 359
 Tasso, T., 229, 251, 347
 Tchaikowski, P. I., 337, 351
 Tennyson, Lord, 223, 251
 Thackeray, W. M., 262
 Theer, O., 287
 Thun (family of), 137, 151, 152, 320, 327
 Thurn, Count H., 94, 99, 119
 Timrava, 312
 Tisza, Count M., 178, 194
 Tolstoy, Count L., 67, 77, 131, 162, 223, 228, 259, 268, 270, 310
 Tomášek, V., 323
 Tomek, V. V., 93, 102, 263
 Toqueville, de, 125
 Tovačovský, A., 325
 Trčka, 106, 119
 Turgeněv, I., 228, 256, 266, 310
 Turkey, 85, 123, 124, 190, 192, 299
 Tyl, J. K., 235, 344

- Valdo (*see* Waldo)
 Valdštejn (*see* Wallenstein)
 Vančura, V., 288
 Vaughan-Williams, R., 221
 Venceslas, St., 30
 Venceslas I, King, 36, 38
 Venceslas II, King, 39
 Venceslas III, King, 39
 Venceslas IV, King, 50, 59, 68, 292
 Verdi, G., 337, 338
 Verhaeren, E., 283
 Viková-Kunětická, B., 270
 Virgil, 301
 Vít, Deacon, 314
 Vladislav II (as King I), 36
 Vladislav, Jagello I, 65, 74
 Vladislav, Jagello, II, 79, 84
 Vlček, J., 311
 Vogel, J., 357
 Voltaire, 138, 166
 Vomáčka, B., 358
 Vratislav II, Prince (later King), 32, 36
 Vrchlický, J., 229, 233, 246, 250 sq., 272, 274, 281, 291, 336, 345, 347, 348, 362
 Vuk, Karadžić, 142
 Vycpálek, L., 358
 Wagner, R., 221, 324, 326 sq., 336, 340, 348, 360, 366
 Waldo, P., Waldensians, 32, 54, 56
 Waldhauser, K., 44 sq.
 Wallenstein, Count A., 95 sq., 97, 106, 119 sq., 318
 Weber, B. D., 323
 Weinberger, J., 358
 Wells, H. G., 190, 296
 Whitman, Walt, 251, 256, 261, 283
 Whyte, A. F., 203
 Wilde, Oscar, 224, 290
 William II, Kaiser, 191, 192
 Wilson, W., 202, 207, 208, 215
 Windischgrätz, Prince, 156
 Winter, Z., 262 sq.
 Wolker, G., 288
 Wood, Sir H., 352
 Wordsworth, W., 222
 Wycliffe, J., 46, 53 sq.
 Yeats, W. B., 290
 Young, R. F., 203
 Záborský, J., 307
 Zajíc, Zbyněk, 315
 Zamrzla, R., 362
 Záviš, Canon, 314
 Zelenka, J. D., 319, 323
 Zelinka, J., 361
 Žerotín, K., 91, 96, 98
 Zeyer, J., 246, 248 sq., 257, 291, 348
 Zinzendorff, J., 109
 Žižka, John, 65 sq., 264, 294
 Zola, 182, 256, 266, 269, 272
 Zvonař, J. L., 325





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